





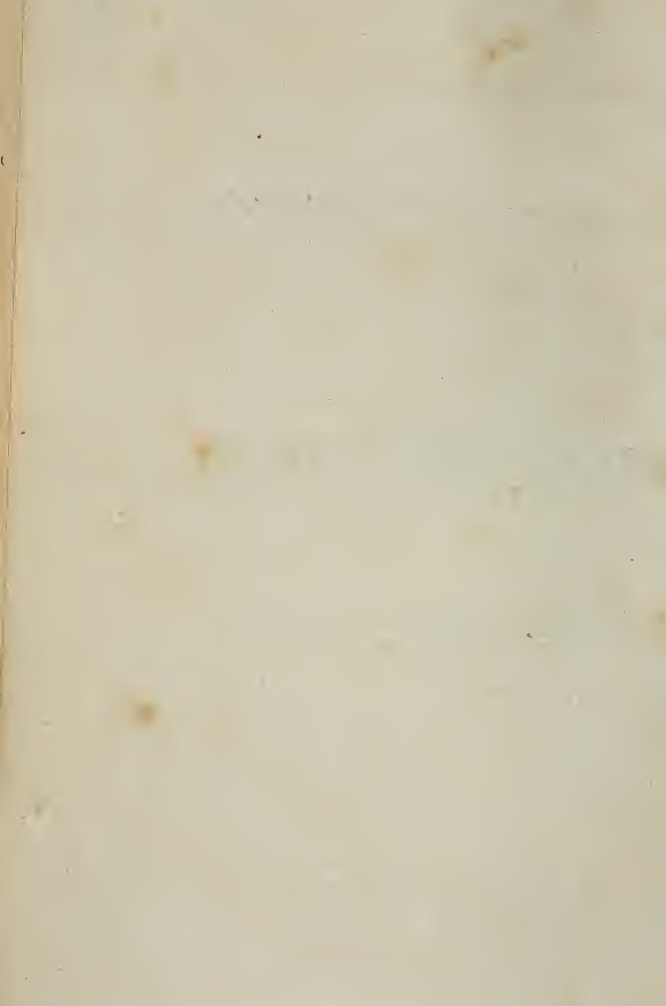
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THE

OFFICER'S DAUGHTER.



THE
OFFICER'S DAUGHTER;

OR,

A VISIT TO IRELAND

IN 1790.

BY
THE DAUGHTER OF A CAPTAIN IN THE NAVY,
DECEASED.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.



LONDON:
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1810.



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THE
OFFICER'S DAUGHTER.

CHAP. I.

AH! who can withhold from parents the delightful recompence, children only can bestow, for all their cares and anxieties! First, the mother in early life nurtures them with anxious affection, and when the nursery gives up its charge, the father's care and expense of fixing in life, begins; which is not inferior to that of the other parent, when "muling and puling in the lap," her infant stretches out its hands to grasp the bosom which nourishes it. Proper education cherishes

all the good affections, and parents who strictly fulfil their duty are rewarded by the love and submission of their children.

Captain Courtney was now experiencing this reward; "I will," said Louisa, "marry Mr. Morrice, if he can satisfactorily contradict a sad story I have been told;" she then related, circumstantially, to her father the account she had heard from the priest.

Captain Courtney could not believe that Mr. Morrice had acted so basely, as to desert poor Margaret M'Leod, but if he had done so, it was a sufficient reason for his daughter's rejecting him. He then thanked her for according with his wishes; "if," he said, "my love, my fortune had remained the same, I would have forwarded yours, with Mr. George; but a stranger to his connexions and prospects, I cannot favour your encou-

raging a passion, that might lead to disappointment; for, even if his family should prove to be good, his fortune, from every appearance, is small; and you have no longer any to reward him with.

Louisa sighed, but did not answer, for this was, indeed, too true; "though," continued Captain Courtney, "if Mr. Morrice cannot most unequivocally contradict the base transaction laid to his charge, I will no longer urge his cause."

After conversing with his daughter, he went in search of Mr. Morrice, and found him seated in the breakfast parlour by himself. He was full of the subject; like a true sailor, his heart was ever in his mouth, and his daughter's happiness weighed down every other consideration. At another moment, Captain Courtney would have scrupled to have informed a man he

was considered a villain; but circumstances altered the case; he could not have told the trembling object of his benevolence that he thought him guilty; but he shrunk not to state to Mr. Morrice, what he had heard from the pure lips of his Louisa; at the same time qualifying his information, by saying his daughter promised to marry him if he could contradict the charge.

“Does she say so?” asked Mr. Morrice, with quickness. “Most certainly,” replied her father. “Then most solemnly I deny the whole,” said Mr. Morrice; “it is a base fabrication, for I never saw the person who gave this vile account, until I saw her, when I once went into her cabin for Miss Courtney. Can you suppose, Sir,” continued he, “I would have addressed your daughter, if another had such strong claims on me?”

“I think not, certainly:” replied Captain Courtney. Mr. Morrice continued to speak on the subject; he said, that not a moment should be lost in writing to Father O’Gahagan, and he was certain the whole would be found to be a mistake.

In the mean time he begged Captain Courtney would use every means to satisfy himself on a subject, which no doubt must deeply interest him. This appeared very fair, and the noble, generous mind, of Captain Courtney could not harbour a doubt, for the manner of Mr. Morrice bore every mark of innocence: it called for reciprocal communication, and Captain Courtney thought it right to explain to Mr. Morrice his loss of fortune; and that Louisa, from him, had little to expect.

Mr Morrice assured him, this made no alteration in his sentiments; for

that his love for Miss Courtney was founded on many perfections, which the loss of property could not diminish.

The fond father was pleased, and flattered, by this encomium on his child, and he felt it was necessary to apologize for having been under the disagreeable necessity of mentioning the unpleasant accusation. "Now," said Captain Courtney, "I shall wait most impatiently for Father O'Gahagan's answer, as I am certain it must be cleared up; but, in the intermediate time, he thought it would be better for Mr. Morrice to write to the Highlands."

"How," said Mr. Morrice, "can I do that? perhaps a family of the name does not exist; I never knew one." This declaration appeared convincing to Captain Courtney, who, incapable of telling a falsehood himself, did not

harbour a suspicion ; he could not for a moment suppose, that a man could degrade himself so far as to tell an untruth, to answer any purpose.

They now seemed so perfectly to understand each other, that it soon appeared to the other branches of the family, that Louisa had accepted Mr. Morrice, and the joy it gave to Lord Rossmore, and his sister, was very evident.

Louisa and Captain Courtney had too much delicacy to say to them, on what her acceptance rested ; they therefore encouraged the most lively hopes, that at last their wishes would be realized ; and by every delicate attention, Lord Rossmore proved his approbation, whilst Lady Almeria appeared in perfect raptures.

But none of the party felt more gratified, nor any so consequential, as Mr. Courtney ; the profound atten-

tion he ever paid to Lady Almeria, was now somewhat divided between her and his niece, for he already felt the consequence of the latter. His wishes would, he hoped, be fulfilled, he should see Louisa married to Mr. Morrice, and he did not absolutely despair of success with Lady Almeria; but even should he fail in gaining her, he consoled himself with the idea of being connected to the family, by his niece's marriage with Mr. Morrice. For love had but a small share in his feelings, and it was of little consequence to him how the connexion was formed, so as his pride was gratified.

Mr. Morrice was now all attention, and it would have been inconsistent, after the promise Louisa made her father, if she had not received it, though there certainly was a reserve and distance in her manner, which did not wear the appearance of love; yet

Mr. Morrice would not be offended. He wished to impute it to the grief she felt for her aunt, and there was great reason for his thinking so; often did her beautiful eyes fill with tears to the memory of her, who was now lost to her for ever; and when she reflected that her father too might soon be torn from her, she felt keenly her own forlorn situation; for Captain Courtney's ship might be ordered abroad, with whom then could she reside? She could not, with any propriety, remain with the Rossmores, and she now, more than ever, deplored the loss of her beloved aunt; that dear friend, whose counsel would have guided, whose tenderness would have cheered her, in all her afflictions: it would even have reconciled her to the absence of her father, who she dreaded might go a long voyage. A sailor's wife or daughter should be a heroine;

but in this instance Louisa was not so, for she trembled at the prospect of being again separated from her father. Whilst her mind was in this perplexity, a letter arrived from Lord Rossmore's steward, informing them that Father O'Gahagan was dead: all hope of farther explanation, or elucidation, from that quarter was now over.

Mr. Morrice hoped that, notwithstanding this unfortunate event, there would be no farther impediment to Louisa's accepting him. He attested his innocence, again and again, in the most positive terms; he earnestly desired Louisa to recollect, that the woman who had given an account so injurious to his character and peace, had been, only a short time before, out of her senses. Why, then, might not the whole have been a delusion of her brain? "Oh! Miss Courtney," he said, "cruel and suspicious! Why suffer

the dying confession of a stranger to ruin me in your opinion? How can you ascertain that she was sane at the time she made this communication to the priest, even if such a one took place?"

Louisa allowed the truth of this; yet frankly declared she could not be satisfied.

Mr. Morrice was evidently hurt, but disguised his feelings as much as possible; the prize in view was, in his opinion, too valuable to be relinquished, and he continued to make use of every argument to gain his point.

Louisa was much perplexed, for Mr. Morrice's apparent candour often puzzled her. If honest in his professions, how could she longer object to him? Yet still, at times, she thought with tenderness of Mr. George; but no inquiry, no message, came from him; he had then too surely forgot-

gotten her; it was a painful reflection.

Desponding and undecided, one evening she withdrew from the party, and seated herself by the window in her own room, sadly musing on the past, whilst dreading what was to come—she heard a chaise stop at the door, which roused her from her reverie, and looking out of the window saw a genteel looking man put his head out of the carriage, and heard him ask for lodgings.

The man of the house answered him by saying, they were quite full. “Where, then, can we go,” asked the stranger, “can you direct me?”—“I fear,” replied the man, “that you will not be able to get lodgings, the place is so full: but there is an inn just by.”

“An inn,” said the gentleman, “is not proper for an invalid;”—“Any.

place will do for me," faintly articulated a female that was in the carriage.

The gentleman, who, for the purpose of inquiry, had got out, appeared much agitated; "there is," he said, "I find no alternative; we must go to the inn;" and, with a voice lowered by disappointment, desired the postillion to drive on.

A white arm rested on the window of the chaise, and Louisa had a glimpse of a feeble figure, at the same time heard a deep consumptive cough; the gentleman appeared to support her in his arms.

It is his wife, thought Louisa, and she is very ill: how distressing that there should be no room in the house. Full of the subject, on joining the rest of the party, she told them what she had witnessed, and the weak state the poor lady appeared to be in.

“I wish you had told me of it at the time,” said Lady Almeria, good humouredly; “perhaps by my speaking to the woman of the house, she might have accommodated them, as there were only two: I pity her being obliged to go to an inn, so noisy and disagreeable to any one that is indisposed. I declare I would have given up one of our rooms to the poor creature, whoever she may be.”

“I think,” said Mr. Courtney, “your ladyship would have been wrong to have inconvenienced yourself to accommodate strangers; but it is of a piece with your general goodness, to wish to make all happy.”

Lady Almeria was not displeased with this compliment. Mr. Morrice brought a heavy charge against Louisa for absenting herself so long from them; he wished he could, from experience, allow that Miss Courtney

wished to make all happy; it was true she possessed the means in an eminent degree; "but she is," said Mr. Morrice, "a niggard of her society, and by that means deprives us of a felicity it is in her power so amply to impart."

"I second the accusation," said the Earl; "nay, I do more, for I must lay my positive commands, and declare, in future, she shall not run away from us."

Louisa readily agreed to obey any commands of his lordship, and none could be so pleasing to her as that which would give her the pleasure of his society. "Her reason for absenting herself," she said, "was in compassion to them, for her spirits were not in a state to render her a very cheering companion."

"Ah! Miss Courtney," said Mr. Morrice, "would I could say you

were always compassionate!" Louisa knew to what he alluded, as he had been urging her the day before to name an early time for their marriage.

This she positively refused: she had not heard any satisfactory contradiction of the story told by the priest. It still dwelt on her mind, but even if she had not that existing reason for delaying her marriage, she had another very forcible one: her aunt's recent death was surely a very sufficient plea, as she was determined no outward mark of respect should be wanting to convince the world of the deep sorrow she felt.

Mr. Morrice had apologized for wishing to hasten the time of his happiness; he regretted Mrs. Connolly, he assured her, most sincerely. "Why not suffer me, as your husband, to participate in your grief? you should still, dear Miss Courtney, indulge it,

and might then, as now, embalm Mrs. Connolly's memory with your tears."

But Louisa was not convinced, and to avoid the importunities of Mr. Morrice, she often left the party, for his language was so persuasive, she hardly dared trust herself to the sophistry of its powers. She did not love, but such was the influence of Mr. Morrice's manner, she could not hate; and when he accused her of wanting compassion, she answered by a smile and look which proved, that sweet attribute was all her own.

CHAP. II.

THEY agreed to walk out the next morning, and the first idea that occurred to the ladies, was to inquire for the poor sick lady. As they passed the inn, Captain Courtney went in; the rest of the party said they would wait for him: he asked for the landlord, and inquired of him if a gentleman and lady (describing them) had come to his house the night before? The landlord said they had, and from the time of their arrival Captain Courtney was convinced it must be the same.

At the moment he was speaking, a young man opened an opposite door.

“That, Sir,” said the landlord, “is the gentleman we have have been speaking of.” This led to an explanation, for the gentleman looked astonished!

“I beg pardon, Sir,” said Captain Courtney, “for appearing thus inquisitive and impertinent; but my daughter felt much for you last night; she was at the window when you stopped at our lodgings: the lady with you appeared ill, and my daughter is anxious to know if you were accommodated.”—

The stranger thanked him with the utmost cordiality; and begged he would walk in; for Captain Courtney's face was a passport to confidence and respect. He accepted the invitation, and was introduced to the female his daughter had been so anxious about: but for the faint voice that accosted him, he would have

supposed her spirit had fled to its everlasting mansion.

When he told her his name, she feebly replied: "that name is a cordial to my spirits;"—pray, Sir, "have you a daughter?"

"I have, Madam." "Ah! then, Sir, I have had the pleasure of seeing her; I had the honor of taking her picture at Plymouth."

Captain Courtney now regarded her with increased interest; this then was the person whom his daughter had felt so much for—it was a strange coincidence, that Louisa should, without knowing who she was, have again commiserated her.

"May I hope, Sir, for the pleasure of seeing Miss Courtney?"

"Certainly," answered, "her father, she is now waiting for me not far off, and I am sure will be delighted to see you again."

“ Her presence will indeed be most gratifying, if she will condescend to visit me. Heaven may have sent her in mercy to close my eyes ! Ah ! Sir, bring her to me directly ; another day, I may not be so well able to see her.” —

Captain Courtney rose immediately ; he would lose no time in giving her this satisfaction ; not waiting to have any conversation with her brother, who seemed to be listening with astonishment, he went in quest of Louisa, whom he found very near the inn walking with Lady Almeria and Mr. Morrice.

Captain Courtney soon explained who the person was, that wished to see her ; and they all entered the inn.

Lady Almeria determined on accompanying Louisa, as it was an ad-

venture she liked, and she was anxious to see the interesting stranger.

Mr. Morrice drew back at the door; he did not wish to intrude; but the brother coming at the time desired the whole party would walk in.

Louisa immediately saw it was, indeed, the interesting Artist, and she took her hand with affectionate recognition. Mr. Morrice stood in a distant part of the room with Captain Courtney, whilst Lady Almeria and Louisa seated themselves close to the invalid.

“ Addressing Louisa,” she said, “ this is a happiness I did not expect Miss Courtney! I thought you were still in Somersetshire.”

“ And I,” said Louisa, “ am equally surprised at seeing you: the kindness of my brother,” she faintly replied, “ has brought me here to lengthen my

days, but they are not worth preserving. For one purpose only do I wish to live, that is to see my uncle, Lord Taymouth, who I expect from India every moment.”—

Mr. Morrice started, and rose in much agitation, but thinking he must have attracted notice, he moved to another chair, and re-seated himself. The noise drew the eyes of the fair speaker to that part of the room, and they fell on the face of Mr. Morrice, who was likewise intently gazing on her.— She uttered a piercing scream, and fell back lifeless into the arms of Louisa ! All animation seemed to have ceased ; salts, and every restorative were applied, but for some time their effects seemed vain ; no word, no sigh, escaped her, to convince the surrounding friends that the vital breath still remained ; and her brother in agonized emotion clasped his hands in si-

lent despair. Whilst Mr. Morrice, impulsively drawn nearer by the scream and alarm, stood fixed in mute astonishment and horror !

At length a groan burst from the bosom of her they were all so assiduous about ; and she once more opened her fine full black eyes, and fixed them on Mr. Morrice,—those eyes though appearing as in wild delirium, darted their way to his heart, and staggering, from conflicting emotions, he leaned against Captain Courtney, exclaiming : “ is it, can it be ! Margaret M‘Leod ! ”

A violent scream again escaped from the object just recovered, and she wildly exclaimed—“ it is ; I am thy victim ! ”

Of all the party, Louisa Courtney could best understand this, and entering deeply into the agonizing emotions that must at this moment, she

was convinced, agitate the minds of both, she begged to be left alone with the poor sufferer! Captain Courtney seconded her wishes by taking Lady Almeria and Mr. Morrice with him, telling his daughter he would return for her.

Lady Almeria could not command her impatience till they reached home, but anxiously inquired what this all meant? "You will hear too soon, Almeria," said Mr. Morrice; "in the mean time, it is sufficient for you to know, I have lost Miss Courtney for ever!" After this, he preserved an obstinate silence; and Captain Courtney did not feel himself at liberty to explain the circumstance to Lady Almeria, who, much agitated and distressed, wished she had remained with Louisa, for she had not resolution to join Lord Rossmore, who had been too unwell to go out with them: she

feared he would ask questions which she was at a loss in what manner to answer, and in perfect astonishment she waited by herself till Louisa's return.

Louisa staid some time with poor Margaret, and by her soothing manner, composed her in a great degree. When an explanation took place, Louisa said she knew some part of her story; that she had become acquainted with it in a very strange manner: she then related the sad fate of the fisherman's widow, and Margaret dropped a tear to the memory of one who had been so kind to her; but for her commiseration, she told Louisa, she would have been in the utmost distress when Mr. Morrice deserted her: that this good-hearted woman supplied her with what she wanted, and that her kindness had induced her to tell her sad story.—

“But for her participation and humanity,” she continued, “I should have lost my senses: she had a feeling heart and superior mind for her station in life! I have often wished to find out this good creature again. Oh, how sadly do I hear of her now; but I shall not live long after her.”

“Pray do not talk of dying,” said, Louisa; “life and happiness may yet be yours; an error repented of as sincerely as you seem to do, is more than half expiated; and heaven may yet have happiness in store for you, even in this life.”

“Dear, kind, consoling Miss Courtney! Blessed be the moment I first met you; so unlike fastidious females in general, who too often think a deviation from virtue is to extirpate every other.

“Thanks for your kind, your gentle allowance, but I shall never be happy

in this world again :—I left the path of rectitude and dared the world's proud scorn ! This I found would not do ; the being for whom I risked it, deserted me, and my feelings turned back on myself ; I felt all the poignancy of disappointed hope, unreturned affection ! Bitter was the draught, but I have drank it in all its bitterness.—Yet, still I have loved too truly ever to hate ; and the man who has caused all my misery has my perfect forgiveness.”

She then told Louisa that she had supported herself by work, but that her uncle, who she had written to, had supplied her with some money ; that owing to his intended return she had not heard from him for some time, and that had induced her to take likenesses at Plymouth for her support, being disappointed meeting her brother there. “I had never,” she continued,

“seen him since we were both children, but his kindness soon discovered me. He does not know all my story, for I have not had sufficient resolution to tell him : I reserve that till the arrival of my good uncle, who I am daily expecting ; I will then have no disguise. Most earnestly do I pray to live to see this valued relation ; he will kindly convey the account of my deep contrition to my afflicted father, should I be taken off before I can crave his pardon.”

Louisa said every thing to compose her, and her tender solicitude was not in vain. Young M'Leod came in to say, Captain Courtney waited : Louisa taking a kind leave of the heart-broken Margaret, Mr. M'Leod attended her to her father ; then giving her to his care, he bowed most respectfully to both. All hearts.

were too full to speak ; for there are moments of exquisite feeling, when language is useless, and it never was so much so as at the present.

Silently Captain Courtney conducted his daughter to the lodgings ; when they entered, Captain Courtney said, “ Is this interesting poor creature really Margaret M‘Leod, Louisa ? ”

“ Yes, Sir, and she has confirmed all that I before have heard.”

“ Ah, I am distressed to hear it,” said her father mournfully ; “ it is a sad business.”

“ I cannot,” replied Louisa, “ be too thankful that I am saved a world of unhappiness ; I was tottering on the brink, but have been snatched from the abyss ! Think, my dear father, what my feelings would have been had I married Mr. Morrice ; and by that means put it out of his power to do justice to Margaret M‘Leod ; to

restore her peace, and the honour of her family by making her his wife?"

"True my love," said Captain Courtney;—"this must be effected."

They were soon joined by Lady Almeria, whose saddened countenance proclaimed that she had heard the unfortunate story from her brother.

"Lord Rossmore," she said, "was very ill, and Mr. Morrice was with him. When she mentioned his name, her eyes filled with tears, and her manner of looking at Louisa, was truly affecting. A delicacy and niceness of feeling prevented much conversation, though it was evident all their minds were fully bent on what their tongues refused to utter."

When Captain Courtney was alone with his daughter, he renewed the conversation of poor Margaret. Mr. Courtney joined them, and they mentioned the circumstance; he thought

it a strange business ; Mr. Morrice he feared must be guilty, or he would not avoid seeing them ; he would have sought an opportunity to explain what appeared so mysterious : but you must, he said, to Louisa, visit this young woman again to-morrow, and after another interview, you will be better able to decide whether she has an undisputed claim on our pity.

But the warm heart of Louisa had decided already ! She deeply felt for the misguided affections of Margaret M'Leod ; her sufferings called for her compassion, and her injuries in a great degree wiped off the stain, which otherwise the pure mind of Louisa could not have overlooked. But now she thought only of how she could restore to happiness and peace the mind of the unfortunate Margaret.

The feelings of Captain Courtney

were not less acute than his daughter's, though of a different nature: he felt deeply the indignity that had been offered to Louisa, by Mr. Morrice's wishing to make her his wife.—Could he, that had ruined the happiness of one trusting female, be capable of making his child happy: he blushed to think he had ever advised her to marry from interested motives,—how unnecessary he now thought! For could not his arm support her? She shall, in future, he continued to think, be guided by her own wishes, and should derive every comfort from him in his power to bestow.

After this resolution he felt more at ease; he had discarded all mercenary ideas, and the noble sailor felt rich again, for he was rich in virtue, and that brings peace to the mind, which gold alone never can! It dispensed to Captain Courtney at

this moment, the happiness of an empire. "If I live," he silently ejaculated, "I can take care of her. If I die in the service of my country, my child will not be deserted by a generous nation !"

The enthusiastic sentiment that now filled his bosom, dispelled those which the villany of mankind had before excited ; and composed by his own generous confiding ideas, he sunk to that repose which always attend those who are pure of heart.

The cares of the world may for a time interrupt it, but when courted by the good, reviving sleep comes to their aid, and sheds all its poppies on their pillow.

In the morning Captain Courtney and his daughter breakfasted by themselves. Lady Almeria was not well, and Mr. Morrice staid with his brother. It was evident he did not

wish to see them : how indeed could he ? They were much surprised to find Mr. Courtney had set off for Cliffdale very early ; he had not the night before said a word of his intentions, but left a note for Captain Courtney, saying, very particular business occasioned his going.

Louisa thought this very mysterious, but her father knew his brother could ill brook disappointment, and concluded he did not like the development of the story respecting Margaret M'Leod.

“ You must, my love,” said Captain Courtney, “ either go to Plymouth with me, or return to Cliffdale ; it will not be proper for you to remain here after I go : indeed at present it is distressing, as your presence must be a restraint on Mr. Morrice.”

Louisa certainly preferred the idea of going to Plymouth, but she would

not say so, fearing her father might suppose a wish of seeing Mr. George influenced her. She therefore left it to his decision.

When they had finished breakfast, they were so anxious to see Margaret M'Leod again, that they hastened to the inn. Her brother told them that she had been very ill all night; she had received a letter from her uncle, who had just landed, saying he would soon be with her; and that the joy and agitation had been too much for her. She was incapable of leaving her room, but begged to see Miss Courtney.

Captain Courtney left his daughter to sit some time with her. As soon as Louisa entered the invalid's room, she eagerly asked her if she had heard the good news?

"Yes," said Louisa, "and I sincerely congratulate you on the arrival

of your uncle in England, I have no doubt but he will soon be here."

"I expect him," she replied, "every moment."

"It will be better then," said Louisa, "for me to visit you another time?" "Oh no, Miss Courtney, extend your goodness; do not leave me, your reviving presence will support me in this trying interview, so much wished, yet so dreaded: sincerely do I hope he may arrive whilst you are here!"

CHAP. III.

SHE had scarcely finished speaking, when a bustle in the inn announced the arrival of some one:—much agitated, poor Margaret scarcely breathed: her brother came in, and as gently as possible broke the pleasing intelligence to his sister of Lord Taymouth's arrival!

A start of pleasure and increased animation visited the countenance of poor Margaret, and, with strength unusual to her, she arose to receive him, but her exertion was transient! No sooner did she behold a form so venerated, so truly valued, than her feelings, too powerful for her strength, overcame her, and she sunk back on

the bed from whence she had just risen.

Louisa, all kindness and attention, administered to her relief, whilst Lord Taymouth, regardless of the presence of a stranger, folded his niece in his arms; called her his lost, dear, unfortunate Margaret; bid her be comforted, for he was come to heal her wounds, to restore her to peace!

The cheering sound of his voice at length recalled her scattered senses; and, raising her eyes, she said, "Do I indeed see you again, my dear uncle? What happiness! Come," she said, "Miss Courtney, partake of my joy! The bright gleam which now shines around, dissipates the clouds that have so long hung over me: I will look forward with hope, that this is a foretaste of the joys that await me in another and a better world!"

Her countenance, as she spoke,

beamed on them celestial sweetness. "Come," she continued, (taking the hands of her uncle and Louisa) "let me join in friendship two objects so dear to me! Miss Courtney I am sure will not object to give her hand to Lord Taymouth; and you, my dear uncle, must hail Miss Courtney as my friend, for she noticed me when labouring under every disadvantage."

Louisa presented her willing hand; Lord Taymouth paused, and would not receive it. Surprised and embarrassed, Louisa was about to withdraw, thinking he was not willing to greet her as a friend: when recovering from a stupor he had fallen into, he exclaimed: "where, oh where is Miss Courtney? Why mock me with the sound of her name, the offer of her hand? Once I vainly hoped it would indeed have been mine, but the cup of happiness was dashed

from my lips ere I had tasted of its sweets !”

Louisa, astonished and somewhat alarmed, was silent, for she feared a sudden derangement had attacked him !

“ Oh why,” he continued, “ Margaret, do you imbitter my meeting you, by the mention of that much-loved name : is it in distress, in agony, that Balfour is to hear Miss Courtney mentioned ?”

The mystery was now unravelled, and Louisa, echoing the name of Balfour, burst into tears ! When she could speak, “ Well,” she said, “ do I know the much-esteemed name of Balfour—you see before you, Sir, the niece of Mrs. Connolly you once loved ;—but this meeting is indeed imbittered, for the best of women is no more ! Ah ! could she but have lived to see her long-lost, long-

regretted Balfour, what true pleasure it would have afforded her !”

“ You know me, then,” said Lord Taymouth.

“ I do,” she replied, “ if you are the Balfour who loved Miss Courtney, of Cliffdale, afterwards Mrs. Connolly:—from her I had the history of your mutual sufferings ! I felt for, and respect them.”

“ Ah !” said Lord Taymouth, “ you are indeed a Miss Courtney, such as I first met your aunt, generous, open, and confiding ; but oh, why do I hear that I must no more expect to see her I so truly valued ?”

Poor Margaret had listened with the utmost attention to this conversation, which was an enigma to her, but it was plain her uncle had a mystery attending him, as well as herself ; a something she did not know ! a secret sorrow ;—but then

indeed how different might it be from her own ! Hers was a mystery ; but it was adulterated ;—in the common acceptation of the world, it was guilt ; but in the mind of Margaret M'Leod it did not bear that imputation ! Her ideas, mistaken as they had been, were not founded on sensuality ; she had sincerely and ardently loved the man for whom she had sacrificed all worldly considerations ; her vows she thought were registered in heaven, her constancy was unshaken, yet still she had too sadly proved this would not do ! She found the suffrages, the customs of the world, must be attended to : the man for whom she had sacrificed so much, had deserted her, and the tie which her heart had considered so binding, so strong, was by his apostacy, dissolved ! The propriety then of ceremony and political institutions broke on her senses ; she

saw and felt the necessity of subscribing to them.

Happy is that female, who, early initiated into the proprieties of life, in every action conforms to them; for it is the "sweet decencies" alone which make life desirable.

Feelingly did Margaret deplore to her uncle and Miss Courtney her failure in these points, her former carelessness about them.

Louisa Courtney, who listened to the remorse of poor Margaret, was the happy object that possessed all these virtues; her mind had been well regulated by good education, but she did not turn indignantly away from her, who mistaken ideas had misled. Those beautiful lines of Pope were always present to her mind,

"That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

This liberal idea guided her con-

duct, and influenced all her actions ; it was this fine principle that made her so beloved—it lived in her mind and dwelt on her lips ; though approaching near perfection herself, she never contemned or condemned the conduct of others.

Margaret M'Leod told before Louisa the leading points of her story, which Lord Taymouth had only heard before in part.

Louisa's tears mingled with the unfortunate sick patient's : as she related all her sufferings to her uncle, the fine countenance of Lord Taymouth underwent various changes, whilst the true Highland spirit of young M'Leod could hardly be restrained : before he had only a slight idea of his sister's misfortunes and injuries, now the whole was unfolded to him ; he found he had seen and conversed with the villain who had ruined the peace of

his sister, who had stained the honour of his family! That man was now within his reach, yet went unpunished! But not long should he do so. Deep thought took possession of him, and the result was instant satisfaction! instant revenge! The moment, he thought, was propitious, for he knew Captain Courtney would come for his daughter, and he could then, without interruption, call Mr. Morrice to an account.

He immediately set off for his lodgings, and must have passed Captain Courtney on the road, for soon after he left the inn Captain Courtney entered.

He asked for Mr. M'Leod, but was told he had just gone out. "Will you tell his sister that I am here, and inform my daughter, Miss Courtney, that I wait for her."

As he desired, his name was an-

nounced. At the sound Lord Taymouth exhibited strong marks of pleasure: "Shew up Captain Courtney," he said: then turning to Louisa, "sad, indeed, is the moment of our meeting; yet shall I be delighted to see my old friend, George Courtney."

Captain Courtney entered.—

"Give me leave," said Louisa, "to introduce to you the Earl of Taymouth."

"Not so:" said his lordship, "but your old friend Balfour."

"Balfour!" exclaimed Capt. Courtney, "where is he?" and attentively surveying Lord Taymouth, he said, "I do, indeed, recognize my friend Balfour; it is, I see it is, the same!"

Indeed the features of Lord Taymouth had undergone but little change; an Eastern sun had given a

sallow tinge to his complexion, which had been once a healthy brown and red; but the brilliant eye, the open commanding countenance were still the same, and convinced him he once more clasped the hand of his friend Balfour.

All was mystery, nor could much explanation be entered into at present. Lord Taymouth merely said, he had come to his title by the death of a relation a few years before.

So much occupied and interested did they all feel in this meeting, that they did not notice young M'Leod had left them, before Captain Courtney entered. He proceeded immediately to Lord Rossmore's lodgings, and inquired if Mr. Morrice was at home? The servant said he was, but did not know whether he would see company.

“Tell him,” said M’Leod, “that a person wishes to see him on particular business.”

The servant did as he was desired, and M’Leod was shown into a parlour, where Mr. Morrice was sitting alone, and where he had been musing on the very subject that took M’Leod to him.

When he entered Mr. Morrice trembled, for he perfectly recollected his face; his confusion was evident, for “conscience makes cowards of us all.”

The Highland pride and spirit of young M’Leod rose in his veins, as he addressed Mr. Morrice. “I need not, Sir, I presume, introduce myself, as you cannot forget I am brother to Margaret M’Leod, and, as such, you cannot be a stranger to my errand, for you must have expected the day of punishment and retribu-

tion; happy will it be for you, if it comes only in this life! The murdered happiness of my sister calls for revenge, and the sword of her brother is unsheathed to inflict it! Draw, Sir! or prepare any weapon you please, for I must have instant satisfaction; instant revenge!"

Mr. Morrice hesitated; he was too great a coward to die, yet could not brook insult. "You are come, Sir," he said, "like an assassin; allow me to wait till my friend Captain Courtney returns, he will be my second, and you may procure yours."

"You mistake," said young M'Leod, hastily; "never, I am certain, will the noble Captain Courtney be second to a villain!"

This was too much; though Mr. Morrice deserved the appellation, he could not stand it; and taking his two travelling pistols from the hol-

sters that lay in the room, he presented one to young M'Leod, and took one himself. He remarked they were properly prepared, for they had been loaded in the event of meeting with a robber.

"Then they are, indeed, properly prepared," returned young M'Leod, "for they were charged, in either case, to rid the world of a wretch who is no longer fit to live in it!" and placing himself in an attitude of defence, said, "Fire, sir; there is no time to be lost!"

Mr. Morrice fired; the ball merely grazed the shoulder of young M'Leod, who, firing immediately, took a surer aim. The ball entered the side of Mr. Morrice, and he fell, weltering in his blood. The discharge of the pistols brought all the inmates of the house into the room.

Lady Almeria throwing herself dis-

tractedly on the almost lifeless body of her brother, wildly exclaimed—
“Who, Oh! who has done this deed?”
She looked round with inquiring eyes, and perceived young M‘Leod standing almost motionless by the side of her brother; it must be him; all was explained!

The blood was trickling from the wound of young M‘Leod, unregarded by him; his revenge was satiated, and he had now to feel the severest of all pangs; that of sending a fellow creature, unprepared, into the presence of his Creator!

The professed duellist may think light of this; but M‘Leod already felt the horror, every well-principled mind must suffer at having committed an action which tinctures the remainder of existence with remorse!

He did not attempt to secure himself by flight; but, stooping down,

assisted in restoring his antagonist, who had fainted from loss of blood. Their endeavours succeeded, and Mr. Morrice opening his eyes, fixed them on his sister. "Grieve not for me," faintly he articulated, "my dear Almeria, for I have deserved my fate;" then seeing Lord Rossmore, who had feebly reached the room, "Ah! my brother there, too! this is distressing—but one pang is yet spared me—Louisa! Oh, Louisa!"

At that moment the door opened, and Louisa entered with her father! As soon as they came into the house, one of the servants gave a confused account of something dreadful having happened; that pistols had been discharged. Overcome by apprehension, they entered the room, where the scene of horror presented itself. Few questions could be asked, but on

seeing the parties, they soon guessed the truth.

A surgeon now arrived, and Mr. Morrice was removed to his room.

Lady Almeria was vehement in her grief; she thought the hot-headed young man should be immediately secured; but Mr. Morrice overheard her, desired Mr. M'Leod might be in no way molested, but suffered to return to his family:—"Recollect," said Mr. Morrice, feebly, "this is my strong injunction." It was attended to: young M'Leod bowed his thanks, and went away.

The surgeon pronounced Mr. Morrice's wound certainly dangerous, but that with care he might recover. Lord Rossmore and Lady Almeria were revived at any hope being held out.

Captain Courtney soon called on Lord Taymouth, who sincerely re-

gretted the rashness of his nephew. He was an enemy to duelling, and thought it would have been better to have left Mr. Morrice to the remorse of his own conscience, for Lord Taymouth had all the proper religious principles so inherent in the character of a Scotchman, well grounded by education in all those precepts, which make them through life so respectable; and they seldom deviate from the right path.

Yet Lord Taymouth made every allowance for the impetuosity of youth; he knew the strong regard young M'Leod had for his sister. His high spirit, and strict ideas of honour, all pleaded forcibly in his favour, and Lord Taymouth could not withhold his forgiveness, though his judgment condemned: indeed the whole deportment of young M'Leod deserved pity.

Lord Taymouth determined not to tell his niece of the sad event, as he feared the shock it would give her might be dangerous, for her life seemed suspended by a thread, which the least agitation might break for ever! "I will not," he said, to his friend Captain Courtney, "tell her of it until there is a necessity for doing so: if Mr. Morrice recovers, we may keep it a secret altogether. I fear the effect it would have on her frame to know that her brother's life is in some measure forfeited; for although she has erred," Lord Taymoth remarked, "I should like to preserve her, and return her to her sorrowing parent."

Capt. Courtney visited Lord Taymouth as often as possible: the bond of friendship, which had long lain dormant, had lost nothing by the sus-

pension; it was revived again in all its vigour; and but for the unfortunate events that attended the renewal of it, they would both have experienced true pleasure.

CHAP. IV.

MR. COURTNEY returned to Exmouth without having heard any thing of the tragical event that had taken place; he was completely mortified when he learnt all the circumstances attending the unfortunate affair. His hopes now were quite extinguished respecting Louisa's settlement in life: his chagrin vented itself in moroseness, and he could with difficulty disguise his feelings before Lady Almeria when he was in company with her: this, however, happened but seldom, as she confined herself almost entirely to her brother's room.

Louisa would willingly have assisted

her, but in the present instance it was impossible to offer, and she redoubled her attention to the good earl, who stood in need of all her consolation. She did not forget poor Margaret M'Leod, but visited her whenever she could leave her afflicted friends.

The agonies of Mr. Morrice, both in body and mind, were very great: he wished to make every reparation in his power to the woman he had injured: "he hoped," he said, "to convince Margaret M'Leod of his repentance, and anxiously entreated to see Lord Taymouth, that the intelligence should be conveyed through him to his niece."

Captain Courtney undertook to be the bearer of a message from Mr. Morrice to Lord Taymouth; begging to see him. It was with some difficulty he prevailed on Lord Taymouth to consent to this interview. Captain

Courtney assured him Mr. Morrice's remorse was very great, and appeared to be sincere; he gave a feeling account of his sufferings: indeed he truly pitied him, for his benignant mind already forgave him the duplicity to Louisa; he thought only of his present distress.

But Lord Taymouth was not so lenient; for the knowledge of his niece's injuries, which appeared likely to terminate her existence, stifled his compassion. However, at the entreaties of Captain Courtney, he at last consented to visit Mr. Morrice; and Captain Courtney, always delighted when doing a good office, went instantly to prepare Mr. Morrice for his reception.

He was supported up in bed to receive Lord Taymouth; his countenance underwent many changes whilst he thanked Lord Taymouth for the

honour of his visit, "which, be assured, my Lord, I should not have presumed to request, had it not been for the purpose of owning my faults, and to assure your Lordship, on the word of a man of honour, that if my life is spared, it is my intention to make your niece my wife."

"*On the word of a man of honour !*" repeated Lord Taymouth, emphatically. He paused.—

Mr. Morrice immediately drew the inference, and a sickly hue tinged his cheek, for Lord Taymouth's repetition brought forcibly to his mind, that he had forfeited that claim when he deserted Margaret M'Leod. His senses had been lulled into security for some time; fancying that as his conduct was unknown to the world, he still deserved an appellation which custom had made familiar to him.

But Lord Taymouth knew the real

value and practical part of a word so often prostituted, and his manner evinced that he did so.

Mr. Morrice was unable to proceed.

Lord Taymouth wishing to conclude his visit, resumed: "Reparation now, sir, comes too late; nor should I suppose my niece would accept it from the destroyer of her honour and peace.—But she shall be informed of your intentions, as it certainly rests with her to decide;" and rising with dignity to take his leave, begged to know if Mr. Morrice had any thing more to say?

The determined coldness of Lord Taymouth's manner greatly hurt the feelings of Mr. Morrice: high spirited and highly bred, he could ill bear contempt; and Lord Taymouth's conduct had all the appearance of it.

Bowing coolly in return, he said, "he only wished to prove his contri-

tion, and trusted he should live to shew his was not merely a death-bed repentance." When exhausted by the little he had said, he fell back on his pillow.

Lord Taymouth left the room, much affected; seeing a fellow creature in agony was distressing to his feelings, but to commiserate, in the present instance, was almost impossible.

Louisa met him below stairs, and kindly asked for his niece. "She is still ill, Miss Courtney, very ill," he replied. "Ah, could I but hope you would again visit her, I should be truly happy." "That I will, most readily," replied Louisa, "this moment, if you please."

"Angelic goodness!" exclaimed Lord Taymouth; "and will you now condescend to speak comfort to one who has, by imprudence, forfeited the opinion and support of society?"

“Then, more than ever,” replied Louisa, “does she call for the compassion and consolation of those, who knowing her sufferings and repentance, can best alleviate them. ‘For such as these the world’s great Saviour came!’ And shall I, erring mortal as I am, arrogate to myself a superiority, and harden my heart against the suffering penitent?”

Lord Taymouth silently admired, for no language could do justice to what he thought of her; but was she not the niece of Mrs. Connolly? the daughter of Captain Courtney? Nature, example, and precept, had conspired to form a character so amiable.

He pressed her hand respectfully to his heart, saying, “I will readily, kind, charming Miss Courtney, avail myself of your goodness, by asking you to accompany me now to my niece; I have a message to carry

her that may affect her much, and your presence will be a balm to her feelings.

Louisa attended him with alacrity; they found her brother sitting with her, and it was evident Margaret had no suspicion of what had happened. She looked very ill, having just risen, and was exhausted by the exertion.

"Ah, you are come at last," she said; "I have been anxiously expecting you, for as yet, my dear uncle, I have had but little of your society, though you silence me by bringing Miss Courtney:" and stretching out her hands to both, a beautiful hectic overspread her countenance as she inquired for the other parts of the family; she named them all, but him she had long forbid her lips to utter, though her manner indicated he was not forgotten.

Indeed, the unexpected sight of Mr. Morrice, had opened afresh wounds that were scarcely healed, and it was evident the unfortunate rencontre had affected her, and increased her indisposition.

She expressed her satisfaction that Lord Taymouth had met with Captain Courtney. "It would be selfish," she said, "were she to repine in his absence, when he was passing his time so delightfully."

"I left you, my dear Margaret, this morning by particular desire of one who wished me to be the bearer of a message to you," said Lord Taymouth: "perhaps it will surprise you, to hear that Mr. Morrice has at last seen his error, and wishes to atone for it by making you his wife."

"You have seen him, then?" faintly replied Margaret. "Yes," answered her uncle, "for he did not like to

send this message by any one but myself."

"He was right," said Margaret; "for I would not have listened to it, had any tongue but your own delivered it. You will agree with me, my dear uncle, that it deserves my utmost indignation. Can the man, who first taught my young mind to spurn all human ties, wish me now to adopt them? Does he, indeed, think to expiate his conduct by so late a reparation? No, tell him, my Lord, that I humbly hope my peace is made with heaven, and that if not, I could not suppose I should at all appease its vengeance were I, before I quit this earthly tenement, to become the wife of a man who has so long deserted me. No, my Lord, thanks to your goodness for urging this justice to be done to me, for no doubt you have kindly exerted yourself; but I feel it

is too late : I feel I am hastening to that blessed place, 'where there is joy over one sinner that repenteth.'

As she spoke, religious hope beamed on her countenance, and gave to it more than mortal expression. Louisa's tears fell on the fair hand of the speaker, which she still held in hers.

Young M'Leod's feelings were worked up to agony ; he could scarcely refrain from giving the sad account of all that had passed—he felt impatient to tell her he had revenged her wrongs, but the strict injunction of his uncle, that no mention should, as yet, be made to her of the transaction, sealed his lips. Silently, but much gratified, he listened to her rejection of Mr. Morrice.

Lord Taymouth was pleased to hear her express sentiments that truly accorded with his own, and his commendation was most soothing to her.

He assured her, he had not used any arguments to lead Mr. Morrice to make the proposal he had done, as he thought her heart would reject it.

Lord Taymouth escorted Louisa back to the lodgings, as it was necessary he should convey his niece's rejection; it would have been indelicate to have sent it by another: indeed, he felt a pride in telling Mr. Morrice Margaret M'Leod scorned that justice, which was offered so late.

They found Lady Almeria in great distress when they returned home; her brother was much worse: he had been in a delirium, and raving of his marriage with Margaret M'Leod, begging it might not be delayed. He was, she said, then perfectly collected, and waited anxiously for the return of Lord Tay-

mouth, who instantly proceeded to his bed-room. Mr. Morrice eagerly raised himself up as he entered.

“Have you,” he asked eagerly, “oh, have you, my Lord, delivered my message to your niece? Have you told her that I hope to live to make her reparation?”

“I have,” said Lord Taymouth, “but she rejects proposals which come too late for her peace. O, there was a time, Mr. Morrice, when these offers would have saved her from misery, and her family from disgrace; for the latter you are now suffering a just punishment, and for the former, he continued, ‘Who made the heart, ’tis he alone decidedly can try us.’ To his all-wise judgment I leave you; happy will it be for you if your sufferings here may be the means of expiating your sins!”

Lord Taymouth ceased, and the deep sigh which issued from the bosom of Mr. Morrice, proved that the words of Lord Taymouth sunk to his heart. He was incapable of answering; which his Lordship perceiving, said:—

“As I can now be of no further service, Mr. Morrice will not expect to see me again,” and with a distant bow left the room.

Mr. Morrice was deeply affected; his pride was even more hurt than his feelings: he was rejected and scorned by the woman, who, a few months before, he had not considered as worth a thought! If he lived, what chance of happiness had he? Louisa Courtney, too, was now lost to him for ever! Life appeared to have no longer any charms! Accustomed, as he had been, to catch pleasure as it flies, he could not bear

to think of the reverse ; all appeared a dreary blank, for conscience, that unanswerable and unerring monitor, stung him with remorse : he now saw his error ; the visionary delights of present enjoyment faded on his senses : too late, he wished he had not lived a sensualist.

A high state of irritation was the consequence of these reflections, and his fever increased to an alarming height. A surgeon, of great eminence, was sent for from Exeter, who declared, unless his mind could be kept easy, and the fever got under, there was little hope of his recovery. All was now confusion and distress.

Lord Rossmore was fondly attached to his brother ; he had hoped to live to see him settled, but now he saw him sinking to the grave,

in consequence of his own improprieties; this rendered the afflicting event doubly severe.

CHAP. V.

LOUISA felt sincerely for the affliction of Lord Rossmore and his sister; the latter kept all her time in Mr. Morrice's room, but Lord Rossmore's delicate state of health prevented his paying him that close attention, and gave Louisa many opportunities of consoling him; her gentle commiseration was very soothing, and Lord Rossmore more than ever deplored the little chance there was of her becoming a member of his family.

Louisa often called at Mr. Morrice's door, to inquire for him: one day

she heard a low manner of complaint, and found it was Mr. Morrice speaking to Lady Almeria; she had scarcely heard his voice before since he was wounded, and it struck her with a degree of melancholy and dread. The interest he had always inspired, though it was weakened by a positive developement of his conduct, yet was not entirely extinguished, and the low murmur and groan of pain, at the moment, fixed her to the spot.

Lady Almeria not hearing her gentle tap at the door, Louisa was tempted to enter, and beckoning for Lady Almeria to come to her, she made an inquiry after Mr. Morrice's health. With all the quickness and impatience that generally attends illness, he eagerly asked who was speaking? Louisa put her finger on her lips, and was about retiring, but Lady Almeria was too fond of her brother not to

afford him satisfaction, when it was in her power to do so, and in reply to his question, said, "it was Miss Courtney, who was inquiring for him."

"What goodness!" said Mr. Morrice; "and does she ask for a wretch like me? Oh, Miss Courtney! unsuspecting, and long deceived, will you pardon, can you forgive me? Will it be any extenuation of my fault, to say, that my love for you got the better of every other consideration, of every other sentiment, and still that sentiment will be the last this breast can feel! But I feel it now with all the ardour of virtue, and deeply do I repent, that I ever for a moment deceived you: for I had most solemnly promised to make Margaret McLeod my wife, when we came to England! This promise tore her from her family, she believed

all I said ; like a villain I deceived her, and afterwards sued for the honour of your hand ! Will you, can you forgive me ?

“ Most surely,” said Louisa, “ my forgiveness is all your own ; but even from your statement, I am not the person you have really offended.”

“ Ah, that is true,” replied Mr. Morrice, “ but had the mistaken Margaret been as well fixed in her principles as you are, she might have led me to virtue, for much is in the power of a woman beloved to effect. But poor Margaret had only a too indulgent father to guide her, and she gave the reins to her own romantic imagination : living constantly in the Highlands, her father’s known hospitality, brought crowds of young men to the house, and she had no female to check or give her counsel. It might be truly said, ‘ She wandered

as free as the goats on the mountains, save love's willing fetters.' These were, unfortunately, ill placed, and she too readily came into my mistaken ideas, for now indeed do I own they were so; and when I saw you abounding in every virtue, adorned with every grace, how much did I wish I had never loved till then! I forgot Margaret McLeod, my vows, every thing but your soft infatuation, and, for the first time in my life, I thought I could submit to the shackles of matrimony, which my too loose inconsiderate habits before had made me dread. I hoped to have called you my own before the circumstances respecting poor Margaret McLeod had transpired; for well do I know, if once acquainted with that event, your pure mind would have spurned me; still, with the idea of your excellence, I persevered, but I have

been rightly served. Oh, why," he continued, "for the gratification of the moment, have I acted basely!"

The agitation of his mind threw a wildness into his manner which was alarming and distressing to Louisa, and she moved to leave the room.

"Oh, do not go, Miss Courtney," sadly exclaimed Mr. Morrice, "but stay," he wildly continued, "and smooth my exit from this world by your smiles. That face would prove the sweet harbinger of high heaven's forgiveness. Stay, Oh, stay, and shield me with your goodness. No fiend of darkness will then approach me, for when you are near, I feel protected! Had Providence always blessed me with such a safeguard, I might yet have been happy, for you would have led me to the path of virtue."

Lady Almeria now saw the pre-

sence of Louisa agitated her brother too much, and she engaged his attention until she left the room.

Louisa, greatly affected, joined her father, her sure refuge in distress and affliction.

“What is the matter?” said Captain Courtney, on her entrance; “You look, my love, more than usually distressed.”

“Oh, my dear Sir, I am indeed shocked, for Mr. Morrice is so very ill, he will certainly die! I fear he will not live to prove, by his conduct, that he is a true penitent; but God, who knows the heart, will, I hope, forgive him! Pray, Sir, will you ask his physician what he really thinks of him?”

“I will, my love; I will see him before he leaves the house, and ask his opinion; he is now with him.”

Louisa waited anxiously the re-

sult of her father's conversation with the physician. Mr. Morrice's untimely fate had awakened compassion in her bosom; she could not forget his numerous attentions, the many pleasant hours they had spent together in company with her beloved aunt; and she heard with the deepest regret, that the physician and surgeon declared, all hope was past.

The agitation of his mind had now no bounds; but he had many intervals of reason. As soon as he was informed of his danger, he had a paper drawn up, which he signed, attesting the innocence of young M^cLeod, declaring himself to be the aggressor, and that no harm, no imputation of blame, could possibly attach to Mr. M^cLeod, whose family he had basely injured.

After this tribute to truth and justice was completed, for a time he re-

mained calm; then again the violence of a disturbed imagination took entire possession of him; the house echoed with his ravings; the gentle spirits of Louisa could hardly stand the shock, and often did she visit the mild, suffering, broken-hearted Margaret, as a relief from this scene of woe.

The pleasant and instructive conversation of Lord Taymouth cheered, supported, and consoled her, whilst every fresh interview with poor Margaret made her regret the state of weakness she was reduced to.

Captain Courtney either went with or for his daughter, whenever she paid a charitable visit to poor Margaret; and those meetings gave him frequent opportunities of indulging in conversation with his friend Lord Taymouth. In these interviews mutual confidence took place; no one

idea was withheld from the other. Both agreed in opinion, that however Mr. Morrice's attestation might clear Mr. McLeod, yet he ought to stand his trial; "he shall not," said Lord Taymouth, "fly like a murderer; he is a servant of the King's, and glories in owning himself a vassal of a beloved Sovereign, who diffuses happiness to all his people; he shall submit to the laws of his country."

"Under existing circumstances," continued Lord Taymouth, "those equitable laws will not condemn, I am sure, to death, one who has been so justly provoked: the army is Sandie McLeod's delight, as well as his profession; he has served in it ever since he was a mere boy, and the strict ideas of honour he has imbibed from mixing always with men who consider honour as a second nature, rendered the late transaction an indispensable

duty; for how would he have been received amongst his brother officers if the story of his sister's shame and disgrace had transpired?"

"It is unnecessary for me," continued Lord Taymouth, "to point out to you, Captain Courtney, the consequences that would have ensued. Cowardice would have been attached to his character, and he would have been slighted by those it has ever been his delight to associate with.

Captain Courtney perfectly coincided with his friend in opinion, "that his brother officers would have sent M^cLeod to Coventry, had he not chastised Mr. Morrice as he deserved; and then," said Captain Courtney, "his sword must have been sheathed, and not all M^cLeod's tears of contrition could have washed off

the unworthy rust that would have corroded it !”

“ From your account of Mr. Morrice,” said Lord Taymouth, “ I really think there is but little chance of his recovery, and I much dread the event, for I must inform my niece of it ; I could not long keep her in ignorance.”

Captain Courtney promised to give him every information respecting Mr. Morrice's health. He continued to get much worse ; violent paroxysms of phrenzy seized him ; he raved of retribution, divine mercy, and Margaret McLeod. He requested that some clergyman might be sent for, to speak peace to his soul ; this world was fast fading on his sight : too late he found that the advantages of rank, fortune, and superior talents were of little avail on the bed of death.

The most perfect on earth, feel at *that* moment their insignificance ; for who can say to the departing breath, “ Stay a little longer, till I have made my peace with God ? ”

Most willingly would Mr. Morrice have done so, but it was too late ; and wildly grasping the hand of Lady Almeria, as if to save him from the dreadful abyss, he ceased to breathe.

Her agonized scream proclaimed that he was no more ! No preparatory steps had been taken to smoothe his path to eternity ; his friends had only to weep, and hope his repentance had not come too late.

Captain Courtney sent immediately, to inform Lord Taymouth of Mr. Morris's decease, as he knew it was his intention that his nephew should render himself up to justice.

Lord Taymouth now saw the ne-

cessity of telling his niece all the circumstances of this distressing event ; he judged it better not to deceive her any longer ; but his good heart felt deeply the pang he should inflict when he told poor Margaret, that the life of her brother was in a great measure forfeited ; for although Sandie McLeod was much younger than his sister, and she had not seen him for many years, his kindness since his return had endeared him to her ; his tenderness and attachment before her uncle came home demanded her perfect gratitude, and Lord Taymouth knew how highly she estimated him."

McLeod was much shocked when he heard of Mr. Morrice's death ; he was regardless of his own safety, and thought only of his sister's anxiety and sufferings. He entreated Lord Taymouth would not tell her of it that day ; " but, suffer me," he said,

“to have some serious conversation with my sister, before her mind is too much agitated to hear some circumstances I wish to impart; there are many things I desire to hear from her, and to arrange with your Lordship, for I have,” he said, “a little property which I wish to leave to poor Margaret; should I lose my life, I would like her to have a lasting testimony of my regard; though it will not equal the wishes of my heart towards her, yet it will prove my affection and esteem.”

“Noble kind-hearted M^cLeod,” exclaimed Lord Taymouth, “all your wishes shall be gratified; although I do not entertain a doubt of your being acquitted, yet shall you draw up this memorial of kindness, it will serve as a proof of your esteem and prove a consolation to poor Margaret,

should she be deprived of so good a brother as yourself."

Lord Taymouth took the hand of his nephew, and shook it with the friendly warmth of affection and admiration. The unfortunate circumstances that had occurred served to open the character of Sandie McLeod in a new point of view; he had been with him in India for some years, without Lord Taymouth's discovering those traits of genuine feeling, and fine generosity, that now struck him with so much delight. Circumstances alone call forth the innate feelings of the mind. The warrior is not known until propitious moments occur to bring into action the qualities which adorn himself, and assist in saving his nation from the tyranny of a foreign yoke.

"If you live," said Lord Taymouth,

“if your life is not the forfeit of your rashness, you shall ever continue to receive attention and kindness from me; you shall never want money, which you know so well how to make a proper use of, for I find my indulgence to you whilst in India has not been thrown away, as what ever money you have must be derived from your savings there.” Sandie owned it was; and received from his uncle the highest commendation for his prudence. “I will,” said Lord Taymouth, “when this unfortunate business is quite settled, purchase for you in the army; therefore you may tell your sister, it is your intention to make her a present of what you have: the donation will gratify, and we must endeavour to heal her wounds, to restore her mind to peace; this kindness of yours will please and cheer

her spirits, and may enable her better to support the sad account I must impart to-morrow."

Lord Taymouth left the brother and sister some time together, without hinting at the sad catastrophe that had taken place: Sandie M'Leod entered so feelingly on her situation, spoke so kindly of her misfortunes and distresses, that although she was gratified by his kindness, her spirits were quite overcome. When assailed by calamity of any sort, the soothing voice of friendship though dear to the heart, touches the key of our feelings, and imparts such an exquisite sensation of delight as can only vent itself in tears, those blessed resources of the wretched, whose channel drains off the dregs of every care, and gives to the wounded bosom momentary relief.

Poor Margaret felt more composed

after they had come to her aid, and expressed her gratitude to her brother for his kindness.

When Lord Taymouth joined them, he found both had been much agitated, and he was happy he had postponed the sad intelligence till the following day, when he hoped her spirits would be renovated. As Lord Taymouth had hoped, he found his niece looking much better the next morning. The uncertain turns of a consumption are calculated to give hope, whilst its baneful influence is gaining ground. Lord Taymouth was not aware of this, and he flattered himself she was certainly recovering; yet it was necessary to inform her of the sad event that had occurred: but he was at a loss how to commence this painful subject, and began conversing on different occurrences.

Margaret had always been anxious

to know how her uncle had become acquainted with the Courtneys, but had never had an opportunity of learning.

Lord Taymouth now explained: he spoke of Mrs. Connolly in the high terms she deserved, pourtrayed his own feelings when he found out the deception that had torn her from him for ever. All this Margaret had been ignorant of, being very young at the time.

The subject led to Margaret's own sorrows. Lord Taymouth said every thing that was consoling and humane; he condemned the conduct of Mr. Morrice as it deserved. "Of what materials must that man's heart be made," said Lord Taymouth, "who is received by the hospitable father of a family, accepts of his civilities, and then tears from him one of the props and comforts of his age!"

The highwayman who steals your purse is noble compared to such a character: but I am sorry to say," continued Lord Taymouth, "they are too often tolerated in society.—Mr. Morrice, for instance, but for his accidentally meeting you, would still have been thought a man of honour; but the farce is over, and he must now appear at that tribunal from whence there is no appeal." Margaret started.

"What do you mean, my Lord?" She looked at him with inquiring eyes.—"You speak," she said, "with certainty, and your looks are mysterious: surely, my dear uncle, you have not been led to inflict a punishment on him authorized by the world, and which a man of honour thinks he has a right to demand. Surely you cannot, you have not, sent his soul uncalled into the presence of his Maker! I hope you have not preci-

pitated his fate. But you do not answer; it is I fear too true."—

"He has," replied Lord Taymouth, "met his deserts, but not from my hand, nor should you have been pained by the knowledge of it, were it not necessary your brother should stand his trial, for he has revenged the injuries of his sister."—The wild unhappy look of her brother confirmed her fears; and in speechless agony, she listened to a full confirmation of them from the lips of her uncle, who related the circumstances in as softened a manner as possible. Yet still she deeply felt, and accused herself as the sole cause of this sad event: her beloved brother, on her account, might suffer an ignominious death: her feelings were most acute; and the entrance of Louisa was very opportune to compose them. She kindly thought the poor Marga-

ret would require some comfort on this trying occasion, and Lady Almeria, from long watching and incessant crying, had fallen asleep. She took that opportunity of leaving her for a short time, to impart consolation to her she so truly pitied.

To Miss Courtney Margaret did not scruple to condemn herself most severely; she acknowledged her own imprudence had caused all her misery, and that of others: this conviction had preyed on her constitution for some years, and proved to her, that improper conduct fixes in the mind a worm which never dies. "Ah, Miss Courtney," she said, "it is unnecessary to point out to you the necessity of giving to children early habits of propriety; the young mind takes every impression, and it is surely not difficult to give it those which are best calculated to make

them valuable members of society. For can that female ever tend to usefulness that braves the world? No; she ceases then to be a link of the grand chain, and soon finds all the misery of her loneliness and abstraction! Too truly have I proved this, but it will now shortly be over!"

In vain did Lord Taymouth hold forth hopes of future enjoyment; in vain did Louisa promise never to desert her:—

"Oh, no," she said, "this last event has completed my unhappiness!" "Ah, my dear Sandie," she exclaimed, throwing her arms round him, "must you indeed suffer for me? must the name of McLeod be stained by a public trial? Oh, this is too much!" Quite exhausted, she was obliged to be taken to bed, and Louisa left her, almost dreading she might never see her again; indeed,

she only saw her once more: the last thread of her existence was suspended when this catastrophe happened; it might be truly said "she withered in an hour;" the "silver chord" of life was soon broken, and Lord Taymouth sent the melancholy intelligence to Louisa.

Although in many instances she could not but condemn the conduct of poor Margaret, yet it was impossible not to lament her; for there were many good traits in her character, and Louisa's mind softened by the accumulated distress that had so lately surrounded her, felt more tenderly this event.

Captain Courtney spent much time with Lord Taymouth, Mr. Courtney principally attending to the Earl.

Mr. Courtney was deeply disappointed: he was hurt too that he had been so much deceived in the cha-

racter of Mr. Morrice; his hopes for Louisa on that score, were now over, but his own were still encouraged, and he lamented to see how much Lady Almeria gave herself up to the most violent grief. "She would not," she said, "leave the spot where her dear brother died; she would not hear of consolation!"

Unfortunately, Captain Courtney was obliged now to join his ship. Louisa would have accompanied him, but Lady Almeria requested her to stay till after the funeral of her beloved brother; and then, if necessary, for her to go to her father.

Mr. Courtney graciously offered to accompany her to him; but he trusted the whole party would be prevailed on to return with him into Somersetshire.

"The hope of this," Louisa said, "would be an inducement for her

remaining after her father, as Lady Almeria demanded her tenderest attention.

Captain Courtney, on parting from her, said, "I trust you, my Louisa, without dread, to the care of our worthy friends; at the same time, I prove how highly I esteem them, by leaving an object so dear to me."

"So dear to us all," replied Lord Rossmore; "for what in this scene of care and affliction should we have done without her?" "Ah, once," he said, "I hoped, but transitory were my wishes, that Miss Courtney would become a member of the Rossmore family." "Poor Frederick," he continued, "how happy, how fortunate, had you deserved such an object as Miss Courtney!" He then deeply lamented his sad exit; it was hard, he said, to have his fate so precipitated.

Captain Courtney feelingly participated in his distress, and was happy the society of Louisa could at all tend to alleviate it.

Lord Rossmore said, he should like to leave Exmouth immediately after the interment of his brother, who, it was settled, should be buried there in a few days after the remains of poor Margaret were deposited in the same church; and those who ought to have been joined in life, seemed to be now in death united; for the bodies of Mr. Morrice and Margaret M^cLeod were laid side by side. It was a romantic request of Lady Almeria, that this should be done, that their dusts might mingle with their parent earth. Their deaths proved to the reflecting mortal the instability of all human plans, the futility of deception, and the uncertainty of all enjoyments, which had

not the broad basis of rectitude to support them.

Lady Almeria sensibly and feelingly deplored her brother's conduct; she did not severely condemn Margaret McLeod: her love for Mr. Morrice she thought an extenuation; so sincerely had she loved her brother, that any one who did the same was dear to her. It was true, she lamented this as a fatal passion, an ill-placed regard. After the sad ceremony, Lord Rossmore urged to Lady Almeria his wish of leaving Exmouth, but she was still determined not to quit it so soon; no, she would yet linger near the ashes of her brother, visit his grave, and lament his fate! Lord Rossmore would not be peremptory, his nature was tenderness itself, and he hoped by suffering his sister to indulge her grief, (which was now so violent) it might be alleviated.

Although Lord Rossmore had been so great a sufferer from the family of M^c Leod, he felt for the situation of Lord Taymouth, and generously offered to see him before he left Exmouth, as it was, he understood, his determination to go to Exeter, and there wait until the trial of his nephew came on. Lord Rossmore wrote to request the pleasure of seeing him previous to his departure, and Lord Taymouth complied.

The meeting was truly affecting, the fine feelings that animated the hearts of both, had been wound up to the highest pitch—both had been injured, and made unhappy; but, actuated by the divine grace of christian charity, they mutually determined on forgiveness.

Lord Rossmore had risen with the utmost respect to receive his visitor; his weak limbs could scarce support

him, and Lord Taymouth, inspired with respect and veneration for this truly interesting nobleman, held out his hand in token of amity, and begged he would be seated.

A solemn pause ensued: Lord Taymouth, whose nerves were not shook by illness, was the first to break it.

“Your Lordship,” he said, “has proved to me your goodness of heart and strength of mind, in wishing to see the uncle of a person who has plunged you into such deep affliction.”

“Ah, my Lord,” replied the earl, “are we not equal sufferers? There is much to be overlooked and lamented: I wished to see your Lordship, to assure you that I do not mean to enter into a prosecution against your nephew; he must, of course, go through the necessary forms of appearing at the assizes, but then the

business will end; for the family of Rossmore shall not inflict another pang on the McLeods! It was poor Frederick's dying request, that no steps should be taken to criminate your nephew: he left him his perfect forgiveness, and I have the utmost satisfaction in confirming it." "But—I could not see your nephew!"—"You can allow for the feelings of a Brother."—

Lord Taymouth could readily do so; and he hoped at some future period they should meet again as friends;—already they felt as such; the noble principles which inflamed both, drew them together; their minds were congenial; and when Lord Taymouth took his leave, each regretted the separation.

Of Louisa Lord Taymouth took a melancholy farewell—"Ah, Miss Courtney," he said, "how soothing

is it to me to pronounce your name, that name which through life I have so loved and respected; it still retains its charm, and whilst with you I forget my other sorrows. As a friend, as a father, let me address you. Do you mean in future to reside with your uncle?"

"I do not know," she replied, "I am yet undetermined, but at present I have no other home:" and her eyes filled with tears at the recollection of the home she had lost.

Lord Taymouth, scarcely less affected, entered into the bitterness of her feelings. "Would," he said, "I had at this moment a home to offer you; but, long estranged from my family, I am not yet aware whether I have any female relative alive who would be disposed to preside as mistress of my house; were that the case, how truly happy should I be to

afford you an asylum in the absence of your father. Pray, if you can, avoid living with your uncle, for well do I know his disposition; he will make you miserable if you do not comply with his interested views, and he will always have some scheme to make you do so, which your gentle nature may not be well able to withstand; and, like your excellent aunt, you may be made miserable.”—

“ Oh, Miss Courtney, I have suffered so deeply from perfidy, and mercenary conduct, that I tremble for its effects on a being so good, so unsuspecting as yourself.”

Louisa assured him the interest he honoured her with was truly gratifying, and she would if possible take his advice. “ Will you then,” he said, promise, that if you are under the necessity of residing with

your uncle, that you will first inform me of it?"

Louisa promised she would; and giving her his address, he told her as soon as the unfortunate business had terminated, respecting his nephew, he should go to Scotland to take possession of a large estate which had devolved to him with the title. "But I was rich," he said, "before, and riches now are of little service to me. I had hoped to have made poor Margaret comfortable for life, for she was the child of a much-loved sister; but that happiness was not reserved for me, and I must hasten to my native land to find out there, who of my relations have claims on my fortune, and to place them in comfort; for a Scotchman, Miss Courtney, never forgets the days of 'Lang Syne:' we return to the 'Land of Cakes' with

true delight, with undiminished regard, and I trust there is virtue in the sentiment."

"Surely there is," replied Louisa, (who was delighted with the feeling style of his conversation;) "for can virtue be properly nurtured without those dear attachments? The mind that neglects early connections, and flies to promiscuous society for enjoyment, soon becomes worthless."

"Ah," said Lord Taymouth, "if the poor misguided Margaret had been instructed as you have been, she would never have erred! Her mind was good, it never lost its purity."

"That is a consolation," rejoined Louisa, "and I trust she is now reaping the happy reward of her unfeigned repentance."

This interview cheered the spirits of both; their affliction was softened by a free communication of senti-

ment, and Louisa felt better able to console her friends, after this delightful solace. But they were soon to be deprived of the comfort of her society: a letter came from Captain Courtney, informing his daughter that his ship was ordered on the Irish station, and that, as she had to fulfil the request made by her aunt, of going herself to take possession of the personals she had left her, he thought she could not have a better opportunity, than the present one, of going to Ireland; and he trusted her uncle would have the goodness to convey her to him.

Louisa, much pleased, readily came into her father's plan, and Mr. Courtney did not object to accompany her. She felt real regret at parting from her esteemed and afflicted friends, who deplored her absence. Mr. Court-

ney promised to return to them when his brother sailed.

Louisa, on her journey, reflected on the events that awaited her; she should see her father again: and, surely, she should likewise see the faithless Mr. George: she could then exert her spirit, and prove by her manner, that she resented his neglect of her.

When they arrived at the lodgings Captain Courtney had taken, they found he was on board ship, but had left a message to say he would return in the evening. A thousand hopes and fears crowded on the mind of Louisa, at the idea of who might accompany him, and she certainly took more pains with her dress that day, than she had done since the death of her aunt; yet she fancied she looked ill; it must be fatigue

what could it be?—She surely was not herself!

Whilst she was trying to account for it, her father came in: Louisa met him with that delight she was ever accustomed to feel and express, but she felt an alloy at seeing him unaccompanied, as she had hoped Mr. George would have been with him. Different inquiries took place on all sides, but no mention was made of Mr. George for some time.

At length, Captain Courtney said, “you will be sorry to hear, Louisa, that Mr. George, your preserver, has been very ill, and he only waited my return to get leave of absence. Louisa, who was making tea, endeavoured to busy herself about her occupation, but it would not do: the cup trembled in her hand, and she felt the tear of disappointment fill her eyes;—he is

gone, then, she thought: he would not stay to see me, and I shall lose the delightful gratification of showing my indifference.

This, she flattered herself, was the cause of her agitation, which Captain Courtney not observing, he continued, "it is fortunate for him that we are going to Ireland, as he wishes to go there on some business of importance, and he will now have the advantage of accompanying us."

Louisa's countenance brightened as her father proceeded to speak in Mr. George's favour to her uncle, who wished to know what family he was of, as it was a name of no consequence: it was strange he should have so many perfections: he could belong to nobody.

Captain Courtney said, whoever he did belong to had reason to be proud of him.

Mr. Courtney owned he should like to see this extraordinary young man.

“That,” replied his brother, “you will do when you go on board, for he is at present too ill to leave the ship, or he would have waited on Louisa.

The next morning Mr. Courtney proposed to go and see his brother's ship; Louisa wished to decline accompanying him, but Captain Courtney would not leave her behind. “It is a fine morning,” he said, “my love, and your spirits will be revived.” She could no longer object. Her father knew the state of her heart in a great degree, and if he condemned her preference for Mr. George, he would not, she concluded, have suffered them to meet; he would not have proposed their going to Ireland together. Her displeasure was

softened since she had heard of his illness, and her heart beat in high agitation as she approached the ship, whilst the boatswain's whistle, that announced their arrival, thrilled through the veins of Mr. George, who had feebly reached the deck.

Louisa's eyes were anxiously fixed there as she was drawn up in the chair, and the first object that fixed her attention, was the interesting one that lived in her memory, wrapped up in a great coat, much altered by illness.

He approached to meet her: his voice was weak, and he trembled as he addressed her. "Miss Courtney," he said, "must have thought me most ungrateful, most inattentive; but I trust Captain Courtney has explained how ill I have been." Louisa tried to appear indifferent, though she wished to be polite.

She regretted his indisposition. Captain Courtney, when introducing his brother to the officers of his ship, presented Mr. George most particularly, saying, "This is the gentleman I have before spoken of, and I hope you will be better acquainted."

Mr. Courtney bowed, and Mr. George's handsome face glowed with animated gratitude for this flattering introduction of Captain Courtney's, which was accompanied by a kind invitation to dinner. Mr. Courtney did not altogether like this, he thought his brother was too partial: this idea operated on his manner, and made him more than usually disagreeable.

Captain Courtney was aware of this, and redoubled his attention; and the sweet conciliatory manner of Louisa, notwithstanding she had determined to be distant, made Mr. George perfectly happy. He told

her that he had been so ill, his life for some time was despaired of; "but for that," he said, "you would have heard of, would have seen, the grateful man you honoured with your notice."

Louisa was about to reply, when Mr. Courtney came near them, which sealed her lips, but her looks were expressive of tenderness and feeling.

Mr. George perfectly understood them, and his bosom felt a happiness it had long been a stranger to. His illness had been occasioned by agitation respecting Louisa, and her presence seemed to restore him to life.

Mr. Courtney, at dinner, was particularly unpleasant: the conversation turned on the death of Mr. Morrice, and the dreadful scene they had been so lately engaged in.

Mr. George had seen an account of the melancholy transactions in the

papers, and had felt much for his friends; his manner, indeed, evinced that he did so. His surprise was very great, when Louisa told him, the artist they had so much compassionated, had been the cause of this fatal business; he lamented the fate of poor Margaret.

Mr. Courtney thought she was not deserving of compassion, and that it was much to be deplored Mr. Morrice had lost his life on so insignificant an occasion.

Mr. George looked astonished, and answered with warmth, that he could not think any thing insignificant, which so materially affected the peace of another, and that other not a person of a corrupt mind; her laudable manner of supporting herself, and deep contrition, proved she was by no means a lost character.

“But she was not a superior one,”

remarked Mr. Courtney, "and it is deeply to be deplored Mr. Morrice lost his life on her account, for his existence was of consequence; much depended on it: the Earl will certainly never marry, and I understand," continued Mr. Courtney, "that the title and property devolve to my friend Mr. Tarleton's son, who must be, I think, a very undeserving character."—

"Then, Sir, you only know," said Mr. George, "the person you are speaking of, from report; and report," said he, "should never be suffered to injure character. I, Sir, knew Mr. George Tarleton when he was at the Temple, and although the partiality of friendship cannot clear him of faults, yet I can take upon me to say, neither his principles or conduct will disgrace the situation he is destined for."

Louisa had scarcely patience to

suffer him to finish the speech. She eagerly exclaimed, "You know Mr. George Tarleton, Sir! Why did you never mention this to me before?"

"I do not recollect," said Mr. George, "that we ever, till now, entered on the subject, and there were reasons."—He coloured deeply.—

"I understand you," said Louisa, "you are in his secret; you know where he is, perhaps! Oh, Mr. George, if you do, in pity, in mercy, do not keep it from his disconsolate father.

"That," said Mr. George, "is a part of my reason for visiting Ireland."

"I will not be inquisitive," continued Louisa, "only tell me, Is he abroad? Is he gone to India?"

"He is not."

"Oh delightful, reviving intelligence; he will return, then, to make his father happy."

"My friend," said Mr. George, "is truly obliged; he will be su-

premely happy when he comes to hear that, unknown, he has excited the interest of Miss Courtney."

"How," answered Louisa, "can it be otherwise, for my ears have been familiarized to his name and many perfections, from the moment of my first going to Ireland."—Her beautiful countenance was lighted up with its usual sweet smiles, which the pleasure of this intelligence called forth to adorn it, and her heart panted for the time to arrive, when Mr. Tarleton should hear this gratifying information.

Mr. George promised her he would wait on Mr. Tarleton as soon as he reached Ireland.

In this charming conversation the time fled imperceptibly, and Mr. Courtney did not seem at all pleased to see her so deeply engaged.

CHAP. VIII.

WHEN they left the ship, Mr. Courtney said, "I do not altogether like that Mr. George; he appears to have a great degree of arrogance; but," addressing his brother, "you are blind to his faults."

Louisa timidly cast down her eyes; she could not discover any faults he had, but she left it to her father to vindicate him.

Captain Courtney said, his brother had mistaken the character of Mr. George, for what he thought arrogance and self-sufficiency, on a nearer acquaintance, he would find to be only

a proper degree of spirit, a noble independence of mind.

“I do not approve of that,” said Mr. Courtney, “in men in his situation: he should have recollected,” he continued haughtily, “that he was in company with his superiors.”

“Superiority is differently appreciated by different minds,” remarked Captain Courtney; “it is not the advantages of fortune, or situation in life, which always gives the pre-eminence; it is seeing those advantages properly used, without being abused, which exalts one man above another: the freedom of opinion is every man’s right, and I think in conversation Mr. George only claims that right.”

Louisa was much gratified by hearing her father’s encomiums on Mr. George; her heart assented to all he said. Oh, she thought, how I love my father; how liberal is he in all his

opinions! More than ever did she felicitate herself on having consented to his wishes, in respect to Mr. Morrice, and trusted her reward would be a free choice in future. Her father, she thought, would not object to her preferring Mr. George, and she indulged in the soft idea. She was regardless of her uncle's opinion, as she knew her father was well aware of his brother's disposition, and was never influenced by it.

His time was now entirely taken up in the necessary arrangements for his departure, and Louisa was very happy to find it was soon to take place ; for now Mr. Courtney had lost the hope of seeing her united to Mr. Morrice, his temper was soured, and he assumed all that haughtiness so natural to him, and so disgusting to others. He spoke to Louisa seriously respecting Mr. George : he hoped his high-flown

perfections would not bewilder her senses, for if she disgraced herself by a marriage with him, he should for ever disown her: the name was plebeian, and he did not like it. He condemned her going to Ireland with her father, now that he had seen this young man: it was placing her in a dangerous situation.

Louisa felt, indeed, it was doing so, but determined to be guided by her father in every thing: she left all to him: and although Mr. Courtney gave his opinion freely to Captain Courtney, it had no effect. They only waited now for a fair wind, and it was soon propitious.

Mr. Courtney stayed with them till the last, and seemed somewhat affected at parting: he forgot his austerity for a moment, and the unbidden tear filled his eyes; but it was a stranger there, and soon left a place

where all-powerful nature had driven it; but the reservoir soon dried up, for Mr. Courtney had no genuine feeling to support it: but as the tear trickled down the cheek of his lovely niece, he told her that he should ever treat her with regard, if she did not suffer her inclination to get the better of her prudence.

Louisa made no promises, for she was aware it was not in her power to restrain the honest dictates of her heart.

Mr. Courtney left her much gratified, for he construed her silence into compliance, and deep affliction for his departure. His last words to his brother were, to beg he would not spoil his daughter, or suffer her to make a disgraceful connection. It would be his fault, he said, if the blood of the Courtneys was ever contaminated: for his part, the first wish of his heart was to ennoble it.

Captain Courtney trusted his child would never disgrace him, but the late event had proved, 'What short-sighted mortals we are:' for at the moment Louisa was about to become the innocent victim of aggrandizing her family, the means of doing so had been snatched from her: Captain Courtney said, this had so much confirmed him in the idea that the heart should make its own election, that he had determined no more to influence his child.

This sound was pleasing to Louisa, but her uncle was much annoyed by it; still a tenderness accompanied his last farewell, and Louisa was drowned in tears when he left them.

CHAP. IX.

WHEN she recovered a little from her melancholy, Captain Courtney took her on deck to amuse her, but her spirits still remained low; the full sails and the ship beating on the boundless ocean, was to Louisa a counterpart of her situation in life; wind and tide were to the vessel, what the smiles or frowns of the world might be to her; both were trying to gain the promised port, but all was as yet uncertain. She fell into a sad train of ideas, from which she was roused by the inquiry of Mr. George for her health; his own

seemed to be improved, and she congratulated him on it. He stayed some time with her walking about, and feelingly lamented the loss she had sustained in the death of her aunt.

Louisa could almost have fancied he had known her, for there was a peculiar interest in all he said on that subject.

Louisa, quite dispirited, remarked to him, that when he saved her life she was little aware of the affliction that awaited her; "Yet still," she said, smiling through her tears, "I shall ever with gratitude acknowledge the obligations I am under to you for preserving my existence."

"The acknowledgment of words alone," returned Mr. George, "is of little value to me: my heart craves for more; would claim that precious life as its own, and for ever would I cherish and protect it! Oh, surely

you have not repented of your kindness; is that face deceitful, does it hide a hard heart? Oh, still favour one who adores you, and allow me to own my love to your father; illness alone has kept me silent, but no longer must concealment cloud my passion! Captain Courtney shall be informed that I love you, if favoured with your consent."

Louisa felt she could not withhold it; the sight of Mr. George had revived all her passion; his illness had given a pleasing languor, which most sensibly touched her heart.

Mr. George lost no time in imparting his sentiments to Captain Courtney; he owned that a mystery had for some time hung over him, but that it would soon be removed, and that he would be contented with Captain Courtney's conditional promise, that if, on inquiry, his connections proved

such as would render him a proper match for his daughter, he would favour his wishes.

Captain Courtney was determined no more to suffer interested views to influence him in the choice of a husband for Louisa, for Mr. George particularly pleased him, and Captain Courtney was not a character to doubt; he knew that sentiment and reciprocal affection were necessary in a matrimonial union, and he truly repented of ever having attempted to bias the affections of his daughter. Happy would it be if every father thought the same! Doctors Commons would not then be crowded with cases disgraceful to the present age: children would not be deprived of the tender care of their mothers: men would not be made miserable by the conduct of their wives: for when mutual love joins two persons, the bond

of affection is so strongly woven, that not even the deliberate libertine has power to loosen it.

Now that Captain Courtney had in part given his sanction, Mr. George paid Louisa the most captivating, unreserved attention. They had a very tedious voyage, but neither of them thought it was so.

Mr. George was to go to Dublin, from whence he promised to write Captain Courtney a full explanation of his circumstances, and he trusted they would prove sufficiently satisfactory to him to allow of an union with his daughter. "He had friends," he said, "powerful friends, in Ireland, who would serve him; and he trusted it would not be long ere he should have it in his power to introduce his relations to Captain Courtney."

To Louisa he professed all that the

sincerest love could dictate ; he promised to see her again in a few days : he would visit her at the cottage ; then, every thing should be explained, and he hoped soon after, to call her his own Louisa.

Captain Courtney had made up his mind to the marriage if Mr. George's family proved to be respectable ; his interest he knew could advance him in the navy, and she might be happier, he thought, than with a richer man. Captain Courtney landed them both at Dunleary : it was fortunate Louisa could go to the cottage without passing through Dublin.

Mr. George immediately went there, and Captain Courtney saw his beloved child into the chaise that was to convey her to the Dargle Cottage ; he could not attend her himself, but sent a trusty person to see her safe. The

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man who was his steward, had a charge to ride close to the carriage, and return as soon as possible with an account of her arrival.

CHAP. X.

SEATED alone in the chaise, for the first time in her life she felt deserted; the maid who attended her had been taken very ill soon after Mrs. Connolly's death; and they were obliged to leave her behind at Cliffdale. She retraced, in sad retrospection, her lost happiness, as she silently ruminated on how different her first visit to Ireland had been to the present; then her good, amiable aunt was alive to receive her, and the kind tender sympathy of her manner consoled her in the absence of her father! But now,

she appeared to be torn from all she held most dear. Though she wished to banish repining thoughts, and tried to rally her spirits by looking forward to the pleasure of meeting her worthy and respected friend Mrs. Brownlow, she had not written to fix the time she should be with her, merely saying, it would be soon, and explaining the cause of her visit.

Her heart palpitated as she drew near the cottage; she now wished Mrs. Brownlow had been apprized of her arrival, as she feared alarming her, and as soon as the carriage stopped, sent for Norah: but her caution was nearly defeated by the pleasure the faithful creature expressed; she set up such a scream of wild joy, that Louisa expected all the house would be alarmed.

“Ah, my dear young Lady,” said the delighted Norah, “now indeed

do I think I once more see my honoured mistress ! Oh, why did her poor servant live to see the day of her death ! Oh, why did she die, why did she die ?”

“ Pray, dear Norah,” said Louisa, “ let me out of the carriage ; I fear you will disturb Mrs. Brownlow, and you will likewise unfit me for meeting her as I ought. ”

“ I beg your pardon, madam,” said Norah ; “ faith, and, on my honour, I know it is impertinent in me to plague your dare swate bit of a heart with my troubles, but how could I help it, when I see you so much like my own mistress as she first came to this bit of a cottage d’ye see ? Och, that was a happy day, for then I first discovered Patrick loved me ; but I never would have married him if your good aunt had not promised we should always live with her. ”

Louisa had by this time reached a small parlour near the door, and, overcome by the emotions which Norah's conduct had awakened, she sunk into the first chair sobbing most violently.

Poor Norah was sadly frightened; she truly loved Louisa, and would not for worlds have made her unhappy: she thought in speaking of her departed mistress, it was only paying a proper tribute to her memory.

Most happy in life are those minds where refinement does not give a keen edge to the feelings; grief then evaporates in words: but Louisa's affliction was of too sincere a nature to trust her voice with speaking of it; and every one had avoided mentioning the subject to her.

Norah, alarmed at the agitation Louisa was in, went for the Lady who was now residing with Mrs. Brownlow; Louisa with her hands before

her eyes, lost in her own melancholy reflections, did not see any one enter, and was startled by a sweet voice accosting her in most soothing language;—she looked up, and beheld a most lovely young woman leaning over her.

“Pardon me, Miss Courtney,” said the lady, “but you are not a stranger to me, though personally unknown; often has my heart done homage to your virtues: will you deign to acknowledge me as the humble friend and companion of Mrs. Brownlow?”

“Most readily,” replied Louisa, “and delighted am I to find she has such a companion: you will have the goodness to prepare Mrs. Brownlow for my reception.”

“I will most certainly, Miss Courtney; but first let me get you some refreshment; you appear faint for want of it.”

“ You are very good,” said Louisa, “ but my spirits are weak ; I almost dread meeting Mrs. Brownlow, though I anxiously wish to see her.” “ And truly happy will she be to receive you ; for you have been the constant subject of our conversation,” replied the young lady. “ Mrs. Brownlow has been looking forward with the greatest impatience for your arrival, but for the expectation of it, she would have gone to Dublin ; she did not like to leave the premises until you came.”

Norah brought some cold meat to Miss Courtney, understanding she had not dined. Norah would not suffer another creature to wait on her dear young lady, not even her good husband, who was always in the habit of obeying his wife, and quietly gave up this enviable office to her.

Louisa found Mrs. Brownlow was

asleep: since her loss of sight she had frequently been in the habit of taking rest when she could procure it, pain often disturbing her at night.

As soon as they heard she had awoke, Louisa desired to be taken to her.

“I must not,” said the lady, “without preparing Mrs. Brownlow for so great a pleasure;” and, going on before Louisa, begged she would wait her return. But she had not long to wait, for in a few moments she heard the well-known voice of Mrs. Brownlow exclaiming, “where is she? where is my dear Louisa Courtney?”

“Here, madam,” answered Louisa, and in a moment was in her arms!

“Well do I know that sweet voice,” said Mrs. Brownlow; “it is soothing to my ears; and I am thankful for it, though I am deprived of the felicity of seeing you.

“Allow me, Miss Courtney, to present to you a young person who has cheered many a lonely hour during your absence.”

“She seems, indeed, calculated to do so,” said Louisa; “and all your friends, my dear madam, must be thankful for the attention she has shewn you. But where is the dear child, my little protégée, or rather I should call her yours now?”

“She is,” said Mrs. Brownlow, “quite well, and more interesting than ever; but you cannot see her till the morning, for she is asleep.” Louisa’s next inquiry was for good Mr. Tarleton?

“He is,” said Mrs. Brownlow, “just gone to England, and has great hopes of finding his son there. His brother, Mr. James Tarleton, is dead, and on his death bed discovered a scene of iniquity truly distressing;

he confessed that he had been the means of George Tarleton's absenting himself from Ireland. Mr. James Tarleton's eldest son had been with George at the Temple, and had drawn him into great expences; he was jealous of George, and wished to bring him to his own level; but this he found he could not effect. George had a very handsome allowance, which he found inadequate, having this worthless cousin entirely to support. Still he was blind to his failings, and too readily listened to his pernicious councils; he complained to him one day, that he had considerably exceeded his allowance, and, that he almost dreaded applying to his father for more.

“ This wicked young man prevailed on him to try his luck at a gaming house, and George too readily came into this artful scheme, not

doubting of success. Elate with the idea of repairing all his losses, he entered into deep play; won at first, as it was thought expedient he should, by those who had determined on pigeoning him; and his cousin was the principal actor in this shameful conspiracy. The consequence was, the unsuspecting George Tarleton left the house a loser, fifteen thousand pounds.

“What was to be done? It was a debt of honour, that must be paid, and his artful cousin answered for him; this excited George's gratitude, but how was this sum to be raised? His cousin would do still more, he would write to his own father, Mr. James Tarleton, for advice and assistance.

“An answer came from him, to say George should immediately have the money, but it must be on one con-

dition ; that he would absent himself from Ireland for some time, that his son might take possession of an estate, left by a relation to the Tarleton family, with the extraordinary clause, that George Tarleton was to inherit it ; but it could only become his, by a residence on it, and in failure of that, it was to go to the next heir.

“ The person who left it was an eccentric man ; disapproved of non-residence, and left his property so as to prevent that evil. The artful Mr. James Tarleton made his will, and knowing the disposition of the property, acted accordingly, and influenced his son to second his views.

“ After George Tarleton had lost so large a sum of money, he severely condemned himself ; he dreaded facing his father, for what could he say to him ? How extenuate his fault ? Never being partial to

the profession he was intended for, he determined on going into the Navy, for which he had early imbibed a taste; he could then receive from his uncle the money necessary to pay this great, and now to him a disgraceful debt; and he wrote to his uncle, saying, he would do as he desired: he would for some time absent himself, and hoped the estate bequeathed would indemnify him for the money lent; for George Tarleton was careless of money further than it was necessary for the exigence of the moment. He readily came into this deep-laid scheme, and consented to absent himself the time prescribed.

“This,” continued Mrs. Brownlow, “accounts for his strange absence. Mr. James Tarleton so far succeeded, but his conscience would not suffer him to be long at rest; indeed the severe affliction he has had, brought

contrition: his sons have all turned out ill, and acted to him with disobedience and ingratitude; a severe illness made him reflect, and dread an hereafter! And he determined to atone, in some degree, for his wickedness, by confessing the whole to his brother, who readily forgave him, when he held out the pleasing hope that his son might be yet in England.

“Mr. James Tarleton showed him some letters, to convince his brother that George did not go to India, and the delighted father lost no time in setting off for England.”

Louisa was most happy to hear this pleasing account, which Mr. George had prepared her for, but regretted that Mr. George would lose the opportunity of seeing him whilst he remained in Ireland.

Mrs. Brownlow spun out this subject as long as possible, for she wished

to keep Louisa's mind from the sad recollection of her aunt. Mrs. Brownlow would, indeed, have had a satisfaction in speaking to her of her much-esteemed Mrs. Connolly, but she was convinced by the trembling voice of Louisa, and the deep-drawn sighs which issued from her bosom, that she too deeply felt her loss to converse on it; and therefore suppressed the inclination she so strongly felt of knowing all the particulars respecting the exit of her much-regretted friend.

CHAP. XI.

HARASSED and fatigued, Louisa retired early to rest; she occupied the same room she had done in her aunt's lifetime: its vicinity to the rooms that had been shut up, brought her aunt's narrative forcibly to her mind; she thought of the figure she had twice seen, and trembled lest she should again see any thing to alarm her. But none awaited her, and her spirits were revived in the morning, by the entrance of Mrs. Brownlow's companion, bringing in her darling protégé.

The child clung round Louisa, and appeared certainly to recollect her, whilst her conductress struck Louisa as looking far more lovely than she had done the night before: her beautiful features were lighted up with more animation, and an arch smile played round her pretty mouth, whilst a pair of penetrating fine eyes were fixed on Louisa and the child, and a tear seemed to glisten in them, which rather added to their brilliancy.

“Mrs. Brownlow,” she said, “is so anxious to converse with you again, Miss Courtney, that she is already in the breakfast parlour;—come, Eliza, lead Miss Courtney down stairs.”

The child took her hand, and Louisa felt as if this was the first solid comfort she had experienced since the death of her aunt.

All that day was given up to friendly communication; Mrs. Brownlow re-

joiced Louisa had found her at the cottage, for she purposed soon to leave it, as Mr. Wayly had sent twice to know when Mrs. Connolly's furniture would be removed ; but that not having heard from Louisa, she could give no answer, but had Mr. Wayly's leave for staying there until she had some account from England.

Louisa now saw the necessity of packing up the furniture and articles of value her aunt had left her, and assisted by the affectionate and attached Norah, set about the melancholy task assigned her, while poor Norah was so deeply affected she could hardly proceed. One article of furniture she had been with her dear mistress when it was bought ;—another, she recollected the time when it was ordered,—and every precious relick was stamped with some relative value, by the kind-hearted

Norah, whilst honest Patrick waited to assist in packing.

Now, for the first time, did Louisa feel her want of fortune ; for if she still possessed the same advantages as before, she would immediately have settled pensions on these good creatures, whose steady attachment demanded so much of her. She grieved to think these valuable servants might in future be doomed to earn their bread amongst strangers, for they had been too honest to become rich.

Low and very desponding after the painful task for that day was over, she strolled to a very good green house, that had been Mrs. Connolly's principal delight when at the cottage. She was struck by the change it exhibited ; now the fostering hand that had cheered and nourished every sweet exotic was no more, each beautiful flower appeared to droop.

Louisa's favorite flower was a rose; she gathered one, but soon threw it from her, for it seemed to have lost its perfume. She had scratched her fingers in plucking it, and wiping off the blood she exclaimed; "Ah, where in this life can be found a rose without a thorn?"—

"In thy bosom," said a voice behind her; "there lives one that never dies."—

Startled, Louisa eagerly turned round; she had not a doubt but it was Mr. George who accosted her; the time was just expired that he had fixed for coming. Her heart beat quick, but what was her disappointment and mortification, when instead of meeting the object of her affections she discovered Mr. Wayly.—

"Miss Courtney," he rapturously exclaimed, "What pleasure to meet you here! I came to tell Mrs. Brown-

low that I wished to come immediately to the cottage; I have been speaking to her about it, and she told me I should have the delightful pleasure of seeing you."

"I am sorry," said Louisa, "that I should so long have delayed taking away the personals left me by my aunt, as I understand you have been anxious to take possession."—

"Possession!" exclaimed Wayly, "dear charming word, oh let me prove I know it, in its full extent, now there is so charming an appendage! Yes, you shall be mine, my own Louisa!" And rudely encircling her with his arms, "Thus will I keep you from all others."

"Mr. Wayly," said Louisa, angrily, "never can Louisa Courtney be considered an appendage to any part of your property. You know the reason of my being here now. Have you

already forgotten Mrs. Connolly? have you so soon lost all respect for the memory of one, whose doors were ever open to receive you?"

"Upon my word," replied Wayly, "there was no woman I had so high a respect for; it was as sincere as my love for you, thou sweet enchantress! Come, do not affect to be such a rigid moralist. The death of Morrice I am well aware must have soured your temper, but in me you shall find a protector. This charming retreat shall be yours; and 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot,' we will live to love and happiness."

"Have I not often declared, Mr. Wayly, that I will never marry you? My sentiments, I assure you, are the same as ever."—

"Marry!" echoed Mr. Wayly; "have done with the cold idea; oh no, I do not mean to marry; you

shall make your own terms, madam, and I trust you will find me as accommodating as your lost and much-loved Morrice; nay, I will be yet more generous, for I will take care of his child, and you shall be still allowed to keep that dear object of your care. It is all well known to the world; come, do not affect ignorance and innocence, my love.—”

“This, Mr. Wayly, is too great an insult, said Louisa; it cannot be borne.”—

The lady, who was companion to Mrs. Brownlow, entered. Mr. Wayly looked aghast: “Miss Brownlow!” he exclaimed.—

“No, not Miss Brownlow,” she quickly replied, “but Mrs. Cust, and the mother of the child you have just insulted Miss Courtney by mentioning as belonging to Mr. Morrice! That child has, I fear, brought much

unmerited censure on Miss Courtney which its parents deeply lament.—

“This,” said Louisa, “is indeed a most pleasing discovery, one most gratifying to me; but where is Mr. Cust?”

“In the house,” replied his wife; “he came, Miss Courtney, soon after you went up stairs with Norah. I did not apprise you of it, as we intended first to arrange our plans, and Mr. Cust did not wish to enter into any explanations but in the presence of my mother. Now, indeed, the moment is most propitious, for we shall not only be able to clear up the mystery of the child to Miss Courtney, but shall have a double pleasure in proving that the tale of scandal Mr. Wayly has thought proper to listen to, has been totally without foundation. It is to be lamented,” continued Mrs. Brownlow’s daughter,

“that the malice of the world too often cramps the wish of doing good, for it is not every one whose liberal mind, like Miss Courtney’s, rises superior to ill-natured remark. Miss Courtney did not know but the child she so tenderly regarded and protected, might belong to indigent parents; still she continued her kindness, and has by it secured our unbounded gratitude.”

Mr. Wayly looked foolish; he would have given the world at that moment to have been a hundred miles off; he dreaded meeting his friend Cust, and he shrunk from the distant and indignant glance of Louisa’s eye: all the easy indifference of his manner seemed to have forsaken him when he entered the parlour where Mr. Cust was sitting.

Mr. Cust had one child on his lap and Louisa’s little protegeeé standing

at his knee: he arose, delighted, to receive them; saying to Louisa, "this is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Courtney; has my Emily told you that I am her happy husband?"

"She has," replied Louisa, "and I am delighted to congratulate you both."

"And I," stammered Wayly, "am both surprised and pleased. Why, my good fellow, you stole a march on us all; though indeed, if I had judged from your seriousness, I might have supposed you a benedict. But how, tell us, has all this been so well managed?"

"You shall know all," said Mr. Cust, "but I wish not to enter into any explanation till Mrs. Brownlow is present. Send for her, my love," said Mr. Cust to his wife; "let us first implore her forgiveness, and then

we will gratify the curiosity of our friends."

Mrs. Brownlow immediately came to them: she was led in by Norah, who told her of whom the present party consisted. Wayly had never been a favourite of hers, and she merely accosted him with politeness, but she was unbounded in her expressions of pleasure at Mr. Cust's arrival. She had only one thing now wanting to make her comfort complete, and that was, she said, the presence of her daughter.

"It is on her account I now visit you," said Mr. Cust, "to solicit your pardon, and to ask if you will receive her and her husband?"—

"Most willingly," answered Mrs. Brownlow.

"But can you," he asked with energy, "can you pardon one who has so long deceived you? Oh let me hope

that the friendship you have ever honoured me with will not be withdrawn, when you know that I am the husband of your daughter!—Come, my Emily, come with your children, and let us implore your mother's forgiveness."

"Where, oh where is my Emily?" said the astonished but delighted parent.

"Here, Madam," she answered with a voice almost choked by her tears.

Mr. Cust took the hand of his wife, and with their two children, they threw themselves at Mrs. Brownlow's feet.

"Receive, madam," exclaimed Mr. Cust, "oh receive her who apparently deserted you, but who lived only in your presence, and in contributing to your comfort: no happiness did she know until she breathed the same air with her mother; to me she gave her heart, but it was not an undivided one, her parent held a part; nor was

she happy until I promised she should be near you; and for these some months past, she has been the nurse, the companion of her mother."

"Is it possible," replied Mrs. Brownlow; "has my own Emily been the soothing companion I have so much valued? Oh where was nature, that unerring monitor, that she did not impart to my bosom that you were my child? How could I mistake that voice whose infant accents ever dwelt in my imagination, and played on my ear!" Then stretching out her arms to embrace the object of her tender affections, a violent burst of tears came to her relief, the force of which broke a cataract that had formed on her eyes, and the first blessed ray of light discovered her daughter and her two lovely grandchildren kneeling at her feet.

In an ecstasy of delight, the mother

and daughter were locked in each other's arms; the children, not knowing what was the matter, hung crying round them; Louisa sobbed from the violence of her emotions, and Wayly had never felt so queer before. He was completely ashamed of himself, for he saw, by Mrs. Cust's manner, she was determined not to spare him: he thought it best to make a retreat, and rising to leave them, he was prevented putting his design into execution, by Mrs. Cust, who said, "No, Mr. Wayly, you must not leave us yet; wait the explanation of the manner of Miss Courtney's being burdened with my child; and then, Sir, you may have it in your power to tell the votaries of scandal, you know the father and mother of the child Miss Courtney protected."

"It is indeed right," said Mr. Cust, "that I should explain this business,

for the satisfaction of Mrs. Brownlow, as well as Miss Courtney.

“When we had been some little time married,” he continued, “my Emily found she could not be happy so far from her mother, and determined on coming to Ireland; being well acquainted with this cottage, and knowing Mrs. Connolly seldom visited it, she fixed on coming here, that she might be near, to go to her beloved parent in case of illness. She had known good Norah from her childhood; the affectionate hearted creature readily received her, and placed us in the rooms that Mrs. Connolly had ordered to be shut up. I was often obliged to go to England, and in one of my absences, Mrs. Connolly, accompanied by Mrs. Brownlow and Miss Courtney, came to the cottage. It was then necessary my wife should confine herself to her room, to pre-

vent observation; she feared her eldest child's running about might betray her, and she formed the romantic idea of throwing the child in Miss Courtney's way, as she knew at Mrs. Connolly's she would be in the habit of seeing her grandmother.

“This plan was no sooner formed than executed; and on my return, I found she had absolutely suffered Miss Courtney to find our child. It was then too late: I could not claim her without leading to a discovery that might have been injurious to us; but mixing in different societies in Dublin, I heard the vile scandal that was propagated of her, I knew to be purity itself; and in some degree to do away the odium my Emily's too ardent conduct had brought on you, Miss Courtney, I met you in the character of a Quaker at the masquerade, led you to the spot where my wife waited to

receive you; she was dressed as a fortune-teller, for the purpose of arresting your attention, and desiring you to send our child to Mrs. Brownlow; by that means, hoping to secure the affection of her grandmother, and to take from you further ill-natured remark. But even that, I have understood, has not been sufficient, for the determined ill-nature of Miss Burke still continued.

“And Mr. Wayly,” said Mrs. Cust, “I have had strong and recent reason to believe, has given full credit to her assertions.”

Wayly knew to what she alluded, and stammered out an apology; but he had never looked more confounded; his insulting proposal to Louisa, he knew would be told to his friend Cust; he had always been intimate with him, and he was the last man in the world he would like to think ill

of him. He tried to make his peace with Mrs. Cust, but not all his well-turned compliments could make that amiable young woman think well of him: the speech she had overheard, which he had just made to Louisa, sunk him in her opinion.

Mrs. Brownlow regretted that since the death of her much-lamented friend, Mrs. Connolly, she had trespassed on Mr. Wayly's property, as she wished to wait Miss Courtney's arrival, before Mrs. Connolly's furniture was removed.

Mr. Wayly begged they would be in no hurry, but still continue to occupy the cottage, as he could not be happier than in accommodating such friends.

Mr. Cust thanked him, but said, it would be unnecessary now; as his wife was just come of age, there could be no objection to their returning to

Dublin, and he trusted Miss Courtney would return with them; he hoped she would give them the honour of her company, as he anxiously panted for the high gratification, the exulting victory, of publicly owning that child to the world, who had brought such an undeserved stigma on Miss Courtney.

Mr. Wayly made no answer, he felt too conscious to speak. After partaking of some refreshment, he took his leave, and not without some anxiety and regret, for the unaffected beauties of Louisa had made an impression on him, which not even the sordid maxims of the world, or the dissipated circle he was in the habit of mixing in, could entirely obliterate: and as he rode from the house, he wished he had offered to marry her without a sixpence. But it was too late; all libertine ideas faded

on his senses, and he found that a truly virtuous woman is not to be trifled with.

CHAP. XII.

THE departure of Wayly left the friends to a free communication of all the circumstances that had so happily, but strangely brought them together. —“Why,” said the delighted Mrs. Brownlow, “did my Emily leave me so long in ignorance of my happiness? Why have I not always known that it was my child who was near and attending to me?”

“You must pardon me,” answered the interesting Emily, “for I had such a dread, my dear mother, that I could not tell you.”

“ Well,” said Mrs. Brownlow, “ it may be all for the best ; had I known you were married to Mr. Cust, I should not have wished you to remain in obscurity, and I might have been involved in some trouble.”

Mrs. Cust now explained to Louisa, that it was her who she had twice seen in the cottage : “ When,” she said, “ I opened the door with my child in my arms, I did not expect to see you, as Norah told me you were below at dinner ; I had frequently seen you before that time, and had been struck by the kindness and gentleness of your manner ; it was that which decided me on committing my child to your care, and when you saw me the last time bending over her, it was not with regret, but merely to indulge in an idea gratifying to my feelings. I was distressed when you awoke, as I feared the agitation might

alarm you; I heard from good Norah how much my child was beloved, and I had no regrets in suffering her to go to Dublin with you. Forgive, dear Miss Courtney, the uneasiness I have occasioned you; could I have known that any ill-natured conjectures would have attended your protecting my child, no selfish considerations should have tempted me to have hazarded it."

"We will not," said Louisa, "have any painful retrospections, for I am happy that I have in any way contributed to your comfort; it has also been an advantage to me, as my eyes have been opened to the wickedness of the world, which I might not otherwise have been aware of." Thus did she endeavour, by the sweet equanimity of her own temper, to do away all painful reflections.

Louisa expected Mr. George, as he had promised he would arrive, but

every hour brought disappointment with it: her spirits were at the lowest ebb, as memory brought back to her saddened mind the time when this cottage was her home; and although she would have preferred staying in it to going to Dublin, she determined no longer to detain her friends, than was absolutely necessary, in a house belonging to a man they all despised.

She again summoned resolution to visit the library, for the purpose of packing up the remaining valuables her aunt had left her: in a cabinet which she had not yet opened, she found a valuable casket of jewels, and a picture of Mr. Balfour elegantly set; the sight of the portrait brought to her mind the sufferings of her aunt; this appeared a sacred deposit: she thought there was little doubt of its being the principal reason of Mrs. Connolly's wishing her to

go to the cottage, and she felt tenderly all the value of her confidence.

There were several letters in the same cabinet, which Louisa carefully sealed up: Mrs. Connolly had written on them "*Balfour's Letters.*" If Louisa had wanted any thing to remind her of her aunt, this employment would have done so: but hers was the "memory of the heart," for true gratitude was blended with her other sensations.

She contemplated the large picture, that had on her first coming to the cottage struck her so forcibly; the likeness to Lord Taymouth, then Mr. Balfour, she now discovered to be a very good one: the face had been copied from the miniature she had just found; the features were exactly like Lord Taymouth's, only with the vivid stamp of youth. She soon completed her task of packing,

and told Mrs. Brownlow she was ready to accompany them.

Louisa dreaded going to Dublin, but there was no alternative: she was delighted Mrs. Brownlow intended to continue good Norah and her husband as part of her household: every thing was arranged, and the whole party set off for Dublin.

Louisa begged to go in the carriage with the children, as she could then give way to her feelings without distressing her friends, or interrupting their happiness, which was now unbounded.

Mrs. Brownlow was returning with all her treasure;—the daughter she had so long lamented had not deserted her, nor disgraced herself by marriage; for although Mr. Cust had not much fortune, his family was most excellent: two lovely children cemented the affection of all parties;

and when caressing the elder, Louisa's protegeeé, the kindness Miss Courtney had shewn her was always revived in their bosoms.

Kind hearted and warm in her attachments, Mrs. Cust's whole study was to make her happy, and to cheer the spirits of one whose kindness had so much contributed to the satisfaction, the pleasure of this meeting; and the first wish they now formed, was to render this amiable creature happy during her residence with them.

She had lost nothing in their estimation now that she was deprived of the brilliant advantage of Mrs. Connolly's fortune; but in the opinion of the world, she had lost every thing; and the crowds of visitors who flocked to the door of Mrs. Brownlow, as soon as it was open to receive company, declared Miss Courtney was an al-

tered being; though to the mind of the feeling, she was ten thousand times more interesting.—The plain black bombazeen, neatly fitted to her shape without ornament, tended to render her form still more attractive; whilst a mourning muslin cap concealed a part of her luxuriant tresses, but showed enough to give a lustre to her lovely countenance, whilst the partial concealment gave a feminine softness to her face that rendered it irresistible to those whose envy did not interfere, nor viewed with a jealous eye the perfections they could not imitate.

Miss Maude flew to Louisa as soon as she heard of her arrival in Dublin. Lord and Lady Doneraile were amongst the first to congratulate Mrs. Brownlow on the return of her daughter, and the pleasure of their

visit was much increased by seeing Louisa with them.

Miss Maude was perfectly in raptures, and she almost forgot the melancholy event of Mrs. Connolly's death, in the pleasure of meeting her friend again. But Louisa soon found all were not like the Donerailes.

She did not go into public, but the large acquaintance Mrs. Brownlow had, brought all those to the house whom she had been accustomed to meet at balls, and other places of fashionable resort, and it was evident from their manners she was no longer in fashion.

The admired niece of Mrs. Connolly was now considered as a different creature; it was imagined a great alteration must have taken place in her circumstances and prospects, and she was now considered as

the friend and humble companion of Mrs. Brownlow; whilst her own heart, lost in the poignancy of its lacerated feelings, thought not of the approbation or notice of the gay world.

The person whose image had occupied her mind, appeared to have deserted her; he had promised to see her on the second day after their parting, but had neither come or sent; she knew not how to trace him, for he had given her no clue, and her spirits were truly depressed. But at times, notwithstanding the little cause she had to be happy, she felt a renovating ray dart on her mind; it was a feeling not to be described, not to be accounted for; it was like that charming benediction which so often infuses comfort into the mind of the wretched! It was "the peace of God which passeth all understanding:"

this supported her and rendered her still, the soothing, the delightful companion to her friends.

Next to the Donerailes, the Barnards were most attentive; they wished Louisa to reside only with them whilst she remained in Ireland, and but for the unwearied attentions of Mrs. Brownlow and the Custs, she would have done so: their kindness had fixed her to seek no other home. But she promised to visit the Barnards; this she frequently did, and had much pleasure in seeing Mrs. Barnard confirmed in all those habits which she had so fully acknowledged the propriety of when they parted.

A consoling letter from her father cheered her, and prepared her better to support a visit Lady Fitzpatrick paid to Mrs. Cust, than all the applause of the world could have done.—

Louisa was alone in the parlour,

when Lady Fitzpatrick and Miss Burke were announced; she arose with pleasure to receive them, for she had known them in happier days, and that always fixes a chain on the mind. But when going to receive Lady Fitzpatrick with all the politeness former acquaintance tolerated, she found that lady drew back; Louisa instantly did the same, she felt the innate consequence of her mind, and ringing the bell; desired the servant to tell Mrs. Cust some friends waited to see her in the parlour, and making a polite but distant curtesy left them to meditate on a conduct that was so extraordinary in a young woman who must now, if not dependant, be in an inferior situation.

Mrs. Cust did not immediately join them, for she was engaged in the most delightful of all tasks, attending

to her children, and by the time she came, Lady Fitzpatrick, at the instigation of Miss Burke, had determined on a line of conduct which they thought would most effectually mortify Miss Courtney.

“ You are looking,” said Lady Fitzpatrick, “ my dear Mrs. Cust, most charmingly: when I saw you as the little school girl I did not think, could have no idea, you would have turned out so fascinating a creature.”—She continued a strain of flattery that was disgusting to this amiable young woman, and to break the thread of it, she inquired if Mr. Cust was in the house; and on being answered in the affirmative by the servant of whom she made the inquiry, she desired that he would immediately come; and at the same time told the servant to bring the children; “ for I wish,”

she said, "to divert your ladyship's praises of me to my daughters."

Lady Fitzpatrick said, "she was certain they must be every thing such a mother could expect."

"Has your ladyship," said Mrs. Cust, "seen your brother lately?"

"No," answered Lady Fitzpatrick, "he left Dublin to go to the county of Wicklow, and has not yet returned; I suppose he is gone on one of his accustomed rambles."

Mrs. Cust now found Lady Fitzpatrick was unacquainted with the eclairsissement that had taken place, and she rejoiced it fell to her to clear the character of Miss Courtney to the two persons who, she had understood from her husband, had been most active in defaming it.

Mr. Cust soon obeyed his wife's summons, and he led in his two lovely

children, the elder of which was immediately recognised as Miss Courtney's mysterious favourite.

"Well," said Miss Burke, "it is evident you wish to take us in, for those are not both your children; we have known one of these beautiful girls a long time."

"Ah," said Lady Fitzpatrick, "you are indeed kind; you not only protect Miss Courtney, but you have received the mysterious child."—

"It has indeed been a mysterious child," said Mrs. Cust; "and to the liberality of Miss Courtney's mind, her father and mother must be for ever indebted; she fostered and protected it without knowing to whom it belonged, and the infant attractions of my Eliza secured her tenderest care."

Mr. Cust then explained the whole

story, as he had before done to Mr. Wayly.

It was too much for the enraged, the mortified Miss Burke.—Mr. Cust now acknowledged this as his own child, which she had most industriously endeavoured every one should suppose was Mr. Morrice's: the account of his death had reached Dublin with many exaggerations: it was reported that he had fought with a lover of Miss Courtney's, who her father had wished her to marry, but that she still preserved her affection for Mr. Morrice, and that the discovery of the child she had protected for him had caused the duel, which had terminated his existence.

This fabrication, if not entirely of Miss Burke's forming, was so actively circulated by her, it might have been considered her own; what then was her dismay, at finding the falsehood

so absolutely confuted, that there was no room left for conjecture, for could any one suppose Mr. Cust would own a child that was not his? His situation particularly precluded an action of this kind, had he been so inclined, as the whole of his wife's large property was settled on her eldest daughter, if she should have no son.

Miss Burke said, "it was surprising;" and, for the first time in her life, fondled the dear little creature, who she declared she had always loved, and supposed it must belong to somebody of consequence, as it had a superior appearance. Mrs. Cust did not know to the contrary; and as all mothers are pleased with the approbation bestowed on their children, she readily believed all the artful Miss Burke said.

Lady Fitzpatrick, assuming a tone

of compassion, declared she felt for Miss Courtney. "She is indeed to be pitied," said Mrs. Cust, "for the loss of her aunt was equal to that of a parent." "I should like to be of service to her if in my power; her prospects are changed, and if you think she would like to go as a governess I would either take her myself, or recommend her to some one; do you think she would like to engage in that line?"

"Miss Courtney as a governess!" exclaimed Mrs. Cust; "is your ladyship in earnest? Have you forgot that she has still a protector in her father?"

"Oh, very true," hastily replied Lady Fitzpatrick, "her father is captain of a ship.—Is he a good sort of a man, or is he a sea brute?" Then laughing at her own imagined wit,

with a silly look she waited the answer of Mrs. Cust.

Her husband did not interfere, for he saw from the animated countenance of his wife, that she was fully equal to reply to this unfeeling attack.

“Captain Courtney,” answered Mrs. Cust, “is an ornament to the profession he belongs to; and that profession, allow me to inform your ladyship, is the glory of Britain!”

“It may be so,” said Lady Fitzpatrick, “but I have always understood they are uncouth beings.”—

“Then your ladyship has derived your information from those who are totally unacquainted with the set of men we are so much indebted to.”

“A few months after my marriage,” she continued, “we resided at a sea port, thinking we should there

best elude remark ; and then I learnt to appreciate their consequence ; and when I saw the proud ships sailing in all their majesty to the destined ports, I felt an inclination to be acquainted with their brave Commanders. Mr. Cust soon got introduced to many of them, and I found, to all the bravery of true courage, was united the finished manners of civilized gentlemen. Of this description exactly, is, I understand, Captain Courtney ; and, indeed, we may readily suppose it, when we know he formed the character of our amiable friend, Miss Courtney."

"Really," said Miss Burke, "you are an excellent panegyrist."

"I only do justice," replied Mrs. Cust.

"It is to be hoped," rejoined Lady Fitzpatrick, "as Captain Courtney's situation gives his daughter so high

a rank in society, that his fortune is equal to support it, otherwise she is much to be pitied."

"I have always understood his fortune to be good," said Mrs. Cust.

"I am happy to hear it," replied Lady Fitzpatrick, "and I beg pardon for insulting her dignity by my offers of serving her, but I trust she will forgive me."

"She will never be insulted by the knowledge of it," answered Mrs. Cust, "for I love her too sincerely to wound her feelings for a moment: from us she deserves, and ever will receive every delicate consideration, every kindness it is in our power to bestow; and if Miss Courtney wanted it, she should share our fortune."

CHAP. XIII.

LADY Fitzpatrick and Miss Burke took leave, not very well satisfied with their visit, but they would not appear offended, for there was every prospect, from the large fortune and youth of Mr. and Mrs. Cust that their house would become a place of fashionable resort, and they were willing to preserve a footing in it, if possible. But, had they known the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Cust, they would have seen the little probability

that there was of their ever being cordially received by them.

The melancholy of Louisa was often diverted by the lively sallies of Miss Maude, who constantly visited her; she felt increased animation from the delightful hope of soon seeing Mr. Spenser; he had written a full declaration of his regard, saying that he had only waited for his father's death to explain himself to her. His father had been a very particular man, and there was little chance of his obtaining his consent; but now he was his own master, he offered her his hand and fortune.

Louisa participated in the happiness of her friend, at the same time giving her a sketch of her own feelings, hopes, and fears.

Miss Maude was delighted with the mortification Wayly had met with,

who, she said, was now paying his court to a woman of large fortune.

Louisa avoided, as much as possible, mixing in company, and generally left the room when any was announced. A violent rap at the door one day startled her, and she was about to retire, when the well-known voice of her valued friend Mr. Tarleton arrested her steps;—it could be only him; what happiness to see him again;—she was all agitation that he did not immediately enter the room, but she found he was speaking to Mr. Cust in the hall, and would have flown to him, had not politeness restrained her.

At length he entered, and she threw herself into his arms with the affection of a child. The good man, though he was prepared to see her, was perfectly overcome, and it was long ere they could sufficiently compose their

their feelings to speak. Their first subject was that which so much affected them. "But I must not," said Louisa, "occupy you with my sorrows, when I ought to congratulate you on your happiness: is it true, have you really found your son?"

"I have, Miss Courtney, and have so fully proved that his absence was caused by artifice, that I cannot even upbraid him for it; he is most anxious to see you, but I thought it best our first meeting should be alone. Remember, I bespeak for him a share of that regard you honour his father with; for this is what I have long anxiously anticipated; indeed, I had hoped to secure for him more than a share: much have I wished to claim all your heart for my son, but I find it is already disposed of. I have met with Mr. George, and, in return for his assisting in restoring my son, I

promised to speak in his favour to you. I am to explain his situation, to convince you he is not unworthy;" but I must first hear from your own lips," continued Mr. Tarleton, "that you love him; you will not object to speak candidly to me.—Tell me, Miss Courtney, does your heart indeed plead in his favour?"

"I will," said Louisa, "be candid; my heart can never own another master!"

"Blessed sound," said a voice that issued from a back drawing room; "never shall George Tarleton's heart own another mistress!"

The door opened, and in a moment Mr. George was at her feet!—"Sweet arbitress of my fate," he exclaimed, "behold in me the son of your valued friend Mr. Tarleton! But still more delightfully will I be recognised, as the unknown midshipman of your

father's ship, the wandering minstrel who was first struck by your blaze of beauty at the masquerade, but not so much by that beauty, as by the native grace and modesty which adorned it; oh, what were my feelings when I saw you again at Plymouth!"

"Forgive me, my dear father, but it was then I first resolved on returning; it was then I felt I had a motive for doing so. I determined on throwing myself at your feet, saying, 'Father, I have sinned before heaven and against thee:—but my severe illness retarded my return, and I again saw Miss Courtney without having it in my power to explain, for my uncle's prohibition still continued, and I wished first to confess all to my father, receive your pardon, and then claim the hand of her who possesses my best affections!'"

"It was gratifying," he continued,

to be loved for myself alone ! Guess my disappointment, dear Miss Courtney, when I reached Dublin : I found my father was gone in pursuit of me ; I had promised to see you again in a few days, but it was impossible to fulfil my promise, for I could not bear the idea of my father's going in fruitless search of a son who had already given him so much uneasiness. I immediately followed him, found him, and explained ; received his forgiveness."—

"Ah, what" added the good Mr. Tarleton, "was my delight, to find that my son had fixed his affections on the woman of all others I wished him to marry ; and that you, Miss Courtney, had given your heart to George without knowing the advantages attending him. I have written to your father ; by this time he knows that his kind generous treatment of

my son will be rewarded by fixing, I hope, the happiness of his daughter ! ”

“ For some time,” continued the good Mr. Tarleton, “ my fortune has appeared useless to me ; now I feel its full value, as it will contribute to the gratification and happiness of two objects so dear to me : I shall again know happiness, which has so long been a stranger to me.”

“ I acknowledge my error,” said George Tarleton, feelingly ; “ never again will I cause the best of fathers uneasiness ; I have only now to devote my life to the happiness of my parent, and my Louisa ! ”

The surprise which his entrance had caused Louisa, was so blended with delight, that she did not attempt to disguise it : she was above false delicacy, and with infinite pleasure the

happy father beheld the reciprocal attachment that subsisted.

Mrs. Brownlow and the Custs soon joined this happy party; they had been privy to the whole scheme; as Mr. Tarleton thought his son should not immediately appear before Louisa, Mrs. Cust had planned to place him in the drawing room, until his father summoned him to come out: but George Tarleton could not wait any longer, when he heard the conversation alluding to himself."

The friends were too happy to part for that day; much was to be detailed on all sides, and it was done without restraint; but often did Louisa reflect on the satisfaction her dear aunt would have experienced, could she have participated, could she only have known, the pleasure of this meeting: but though she feelingly regretted this happiness was denied her, Louisa

was too good to repine; she was thankful for her present felicity, she was grateful for the blessings still in her power; and it added not a little to her pleasureable sensations, to hear that Lord Rossmore and lady Almeria had returned with Mr. Tarleton and his son.

On Mr. Tarleton's going to England, he went first to them, and it was settled when he had found his son, they should all return together; for the violence of Lady Almeria's grief had subsided; it had worn itself out, from excess of indulgence; and she now agreed with her brother, in thinking it would be better to leave a place where they had experienced so much misery.

By a fortunate coincidence, it struck George Tarleton the best place to hear of his father would be at Exmouth, where he had heard from

Louisa, Lord Rossmore and Lady Almeria were; and he arrived there two days after his father, when a developement took place.

The spirits of Lord Rossmore were renovated by thinking there was a prospect of Louisa's being a member of his family; "She will yet," he exclaimed, "be Lady Rossmore; and her children, trained up in the paths of virtue and propriety, will be the happy inheritors of my honour and estates.

"I must return," he said "to see this realized, and to close my eyes in peace at Rossmore Castle. This happy event proved to him, that even in the days of affliction, Providence kindly provides some sources of enjoyment and consolation, some gleam of comfort to the good."

Mr. Courtney had left the Earl and Lady Almeria, soon after his return

from Plymouth; he had renewed his proposals of marriage to Lady Almeria, at the same time giving her to understand, that Louisa had formed an attachment for some one beneath her, and that he was resolved by his marriage to do away all hopes Louisa might have of gaining any thing from him.

Lady Almeria disliked this motive, and was hurt at his supposing her composed enough to think of forming an alliance with any one, whilst her heart was still bleeding for the loss of her brother; nor would she be the means of depriving her beloved Miss Courtney of what she so truly deserved, and she considered as her right. Miss Courtney, she was convinced, could not form an improper attachment.

Mr. Courtney was much mortified and disappointed; he had entertained

very flattering hopes, which were now entirely dashed. He returned to Clifdale in no very good temper; and wrote a letter to his brother and Louisa, declaring she would forfeit every claim to his notice, if she married the young man her father and herself seemed so partial to.

The arrival of George Tarleton in Dublin, after his mysterious absence, was a subject of general conversation; the large fortune he would inherit from his father, and his being now presumptive heir to the Earl of Rossmore, became the constant theme; all were on the tiptoe of expectation; most mothers were anxious for the time they could introduce their daughters to a young man, who would prove so desirable a match.

Louisa soon visited Lady Almeria: the Earl she found but a mere shadow of what he had been; his person only

was altered, his manner and kindness to her were still the same. He spoke without reserve of her marriage with George Tarlton: he said he should go as soon as possible to Rossmore Castle, to prepare it properly for her reception; for when they were united, he should consider himself as only a visitor, as he should put them into immediate possession of that part of his property, and should have true pleasure in seeing them live there.

CHAP. XIV.

IT was soon rumoured about Dublin that George Tarleton was attached to Miss Courtney ; and again she excited the envy of the women, who could not account for this strange circumstance, knowing he had never been in Dublin during her visit to her aunt ; it was inexplicable to every one, but the prying and never-ceasing curiosity of Miss Burke soon found it out, and it conveyed a severe pang to her heart ; for now she was convinced Louisa would be happy, would be ennobled ; and it was not in the power of her evil machinations

to prevent it. The only consolation she had, was that of indulging in private scandal, with the chosen few that would listen to her.

The absence of Wayly was soon accounted for; he had dipped his property so much, he was obliged to abscond; the different persons of whom he had taken up large sums of money, insisted on being paid when he came into possession of Mrs. Connolly's property, a large part of which was advertised to be sold, and what remained was very inadequate to support his extravagance; he therefore set out on a tour, till all these mortifying circumstances had a little blown over; the lady he was going to be married to, having jilted him, on discovering the derangement of his affairs.

The cottage at the Dargle was the first thing to be sold, and Mr. Tarle-

ton bought it, determining his son should settle it on Louisa as a marriage settlement, there being a fine estate annexed to it.

The first information Louisa had of this desirable circumstance, was on her inquiry if Mr. Tarleton could put her into a way of removing the heavy part of the furniture from the cottage. "That," said Mr. Tarleton, "is now unnecessary, as in future you are to consider it as your own."

He then explained what he had done, and received from the grateful Louisa those thanks that she considered so justly his due. Every moment her love increased for the beautiful, the interesting George Tarleton; she found that the goodness of his heart alone had been the cause of his so long absenting himself from his father.

The unworthy cousin for whom he

had sacrificed so much, confessed his guilt, and Mr. George's kindness; he frankly owned he had acted in concert with his father, to keep him out of his estate, which Mr. James Tarleton's conscience would not suffer him to keep, with any degree of happiness to himself; and when his son, the once artful, but now humbled young man, appeared before the injured, but forgiving George Tarleton, George appeared more like the generous friend, than the severe accuser, who had suffered from his perfidy.

The meeting of the two cousins took place in the presence of Louisa: her fond heart beheld with delight the forgiving kindness of the man she was to be united to. No scruple, no wish existed, to prevent her giving him an unlimited power over her future fate, and happiness in life.

She wrote, as had ever been her

custom, a faithful account of all that passed to her father, whose paternal heart glowed with gratitude and pleasure, when he reflected on the happiness that already brightened the path of his beloved child. Sweet hope, and yet more delightful certainty, were once more inmates of his honest bosom; they were not altogether strangers there, though they had some time deserted a dwelling so well calculated to foster them.

Captain Courtney wrote to say, he would be in Dublin in less than a fortnight, as he was anxious to have the happiness of his darling Louisa confirmed beyond the power of accident: he had received every satisfactory and previous communication from Mr. Tarleton.

Louisa was now arrived at that epoch in life, which either insures happiness, or destroys it for ever; for

a mind of sensibility cannot allow of a medium in the marriage state; though some cold plodders in domestic comforts fancy, that if they live so as to save appearances to the world, they may be termed happy. But unless true affection, mutual confidence, and a proper allowance for the failings of each other, are the principal ingredients on which felicity is built, all soon becomes a dreary blank, or scene of warfare, and sullen discontent.

But the prospects of Louisa Courtney and George Tarleton had the brightest appearance; for there was so much goodness of heart, so much solidity of understanding, that there was little fear of there ever being a reverse.

Louisa, in her own approaching happiness, did not forget her much-esteemed friend Lord Taymouth. She wrote to him, and made his mind per-

fectly easy respecting her future destiny. She kindly, and most anxiously inquired about the fate of Mr. M^cLeod, and then informed his Lordship, she had found a picture of himself at the cottage, with some letters; that she wished to retain the former as a recollection of him, but the latter she would send him whenever he wished.

His answer to this letter was couched in the highest terms of respect; he assured her it was most flattering to him, that she wished to keep his picture. The letters she might reserve until they met, which happy event, he trusted, was not far distant; that as she hinted there was a probability of her settling in Ireland, he should make a point of visiting her; and, as the name of Courtney had ever peculiar charms for him, he had vested in that name ten thousand pounds in

the funds for her: that he found on his return to Scotland but few relatives alive, that his fortune was more than sufficient for himself, and he trusted Miss Courtney would not refuse this mark of his high esteem, nor value it less from knowing it was a sum intended for poor Margaret M^cLeod.

He then touched feelingly on her afflicted father's distress, but that it was much relieved on Sandie M^cLeod's being acquitted, owing to the forbearance of Lord Rossmore, for which they were all most grateful. He concluded by desiring his compliments to that family, of which she was so soon to become the honour and the pride.

Louisa was truly gratified by this handsome conduct of Lord Taymouth; she felt the full extent of the obligation, not only on account of its intrinsic value, but from the manner

the favor was conferred; not a hint having been given of Lord Taymouth's intentions until it was absolutely made her own property.

Captain Courtney was punctual as to the time of his arrival; and his stay being limited, his daughter's wedding was hastened. It was settled all should go to Rossmore Castle immediately after the ceremony. Captain Courtney's heart glowed with sentiments of regard and esteem for all the party he met on his arrival in Dublin, and he greeted them all as old friends.

George Tarleton's happiness knew no bounds when Captain Courtney came: the respect he had formerly inspired as the commander, had not been greater than that, which, as the father of his Louisa, he now claimed; it had then, as now, been without dread: it was always blended with

regard which increased as he reflected Captain Courtney had been his friend when there was no motive to make him so.

The happiness of George Tarleton's father seemed to equal his son's, and the settlement he empowered him to make on Louisa, and the equipages that were provided, might be considered almost princely.

George Tarleton's marriage with Louisa Courtney now became the reigning topic of the day, and a party at Lady Fitzpatrick's fully discussed the subject.

Mrs. Stafford declared it was a thousand pities George Tarleton should be so soon shackled, for, with his fine spirit, he promised to be one of the most dashing young men about town! "But," she remarked, "he would now be perfectly lost in the

character of that domestic animal, a husband."

"Egad," exclaimed Lord Mountmorrice, "you are right, Mrs. Stafford; matrimony generally tames a man, though it has not the same effect on your sex: for are you not a living proof to the contrary?"

"You are mistaken, Mountmorrice," replied Mrs. Stafford; "had you seen me when I went to Geneva; living on the poor pittance Mr. Stafford thought proper to allow me, you would have seen my spirit completely cramped: do you know he had the conscience only to allow me six hundred a year?"

"Oh shocking," said Lord Mountmorrice; "how could he suppose a woman of consequence or spirit could exist on that?"

"I soon convinced him it was impossible by returning," replied Mrs.

Stafford: "he had taken me for better or worse, and I believe he finds, now, it is more to his advantage our living together."

"You have always," said Lady Fitzpatrick, "been a most accommodating couple, for your separation, I understand, when you went to Geneva, was by mutual consent."

"Oh perfectly so, my dear," replied Mrs. Stafford, "and still by mutual consent, we see but little of each other, though we live under the same roof."

"Ah," said Lord Mountmorrice, "that may make matrimony tolerable; for, upon honour, it has ever struck me, that the most lovely woman in nature would tire, if constantly with her: 'tis variety, sweet variety, that gives a charm and zest to every thing."

"I think," said Lady Fitzpatrick

“your Lordship carries your ideas of variety too far; you would be a perfect rover.”—

“Your Ladyship is the last person in the world who should accuse me of that failing, for have I not with the utmost constancy paid homage to your charms?”

This speech was accompanied by one of those looks Lord Mountmorrice always thought must be irresistible; indeed they ever proved so to Lady Fitzpatrick, who felt highly gratified by the compliment.

“I think,” said Lord Mountmorrice, “Wayly is convincing the world of his constancy: I had a letter from him this morning, declaring he could not return till Miss Courtney was married.”

“I admire that,” said Lady Fitzpatrick, “when I know positively he has, since Miss Courtney went to

England, made proposals to the rich heiress Miss O'Neil."

"Ah, that may be," replied Lord Mountmorrice, "but depend on it Miss Courtney still possessed his heart. Do you know, they met at the cottage, and the sight of her revived all his love."—

This was a piece of intelligence Lady Fitzpatrick had not heard of, and she was astonished her brother had not imparted it.

"There was now," she said, "no chance for him, and she hoped he would not make a fool of himself, but return; as probably it would be some time before the marriage took place."

But in this Lady Fitzpatrick was disappointed, as the next day George Tarleton and Louisa Courtney were to be united.

Louisa, influenced by education and custom, did not like to be married,

as was usual in Ireland, in a house. She thought that the ceremony which was to decide her fate in life, would be best confirmed, more awfully impressed, at the altar of the God she adored. Her wishes were a law to the enraptured George Tarleton; it was therefore settled, they should be married at the Rotunda Chapel.

The elegant carriages of the party waited for them at the door, and just as they were stepping in to them after the ceremony, Miss Burke passed. She had been taking her morning walk in the gardens, and was proceeding on those visits of spiteful inquiry so destructive to the characters of all who came within her ken.

CHAP. XV.

LOUISA, elegantly attired, and looking as blooming as the morn, and as retiring as her mother Eve, "Who would be wooed, but not unsought be won," was the first to arrest her attention, as she was handed into her own carriage by the charming George Tarleton. This was almost too much for the envious Miss Burke; yet curiosity prompted her to stay to see the rest of the party, and she still lingered in sight.

Mr. and Mrs. Cust followed in an elegant vis-à-vis: Mrs. Brownlow and

the two children in Mrs. Brownlow's travelling coach, for never would she be parted from them. Providence, she said, had blessed her with sight to watch their growing beauties and perfections, and she would not for a moment lose this delightful gratification.

Captain Courtney and Mr. Tarleton followed in a superb new carriage ; the latter had been brought from England for the occasion.

The servants who attended, and the grandeur of the cavalcade as they went through Britain-street, excited general observation, and Miss Burke, with a jaundiced eye, watched them as far as possible.

Miss Maude had attended Louisa as bride maid, but she could not accompany the party to the country, as she every day expected Mr. Spencer from England : but wishing to join in the

bridal train, she accompanied them as far as Phœnix Park, in Lord Done-raile's carriage. All added to the pomposity of the scene, and rendered Miss Burke almost unfit to pay visits that morning. But she had still one gratification left, for if she called now on her friends, she might probably be the first person to inform the fashionable world, that Mr. George Tarleton and Louisa Courtney were married that morning.

It was an errand of importance, and she still felt of consequence; whilst the happy party, as they journeyed on to the county of Meath, thought not of the conversation, the animadversions, that were passing on them: occupied by their own happiness, it served as a boundary to their ideas, all for the present was concentrated in that.

As they drew near Rossmore Castle,

just before they reached the noble mansion, they were met by a group of girls, habited in the first style of bridal decoration: the most conspicuous amongst them was a fine girl in mourning, carrying a dove in one hand, and the representation of a serpent in the other, the emblems of love and death! At the moment, Louisa did not understand them, but the peculiarity of the child's appearance engaged her attention, and she ordered the carriage to stop:—

No sooner did the girl who had excited her curiosity approach, than she recognised the daughter of the poor fisherman's widow: it was then explained; the serpent was an emblem of her own loss, and the dove of the festival they were now about to celebrate.

Louisa spoke to her in the kindest manner, and desired she would come

to her the following day, and the happy child returned to the juvenile party with her consequence much increased by the partial notice of the bride.

Lord Rossmore and his sister received them with pleasure, but it was not unalloyed; the recollection of the brother they had lost, forcibly occurred to them, for when we lose a beloved object, their perfections only are remembered: all that was painful to our feelings is forgotten, and we unceasingly deplore the good qualities that are lost to us for ever: and although Lord Rossmore and Lady Almeria hailed Louisa as the future mistress of Rossmore Castle, they could not help wishing their brother had been permitted to make her so; but their liberal minds prevented this idea from operating on their manner, and they both welcomed them so as

not to betray the feelings of their hearts.

Lord Rossmore placed the bride at the head of the table, saying, that was now her seat; and Lady Almeria, without envying or repining, resigned it to one she had so long esteemed. She explained that the procession of children they had met, were sent by her, and expressed herself pleased to find the little girl she had wished to be conspicuous had been remarked by Louisa. A large party of the surrounding poor were entertained that day at the Castle, and the children, by Lady Almeria's desire, came in the evening, when each was presented with a bit of cake.

The sight of the little girl Louisa had seen in the morning revived the idea of poor Father O'Gahagan, and his name escaped her lips.

“ Ah, Madam,” said the child, “ he

would have been the first to have waited on you, if he had been—

Louisa interrupted her.—“ Oh, I know he would, my dear, but we must reconcile ourselves to his death, and reflect on his goodness, for he was a most excellent man.”

“ Yes, madam,” replied the child, “ but I hope he will not die ! ”

“ Not die ! ” exclaimed Louisa, “ what do you mean ? ” “ Oh, he is very ill indeed, madam, but the doctor who attended my dear mother, says he will live, for I go to see him every day, and he often talks of dear sweet Miss Courtney : he prayed you might come to Rossmore Castle again, and when he counts his beads every day he blesses your name ! ”

“ Is it possible ? ” said Louisa.

“ Yes, it is very true indeed,” answered the child, “ for I saw him this morning.”

Louisa, delighted, dismissed the girl with every good wish to father O'Gahagan: she could not mention the circumstance to her friends, for a fresh evidence now appeared of Mr. Morrice's deception.

The following morning she asked Mrs. Flynn, the housekeeper, for Father O'Gahagan: she confirmed the child's account, and in the course of the day Louisa visited him, accompanied by her husband, to whom she told the whole story.

The good old man revived; when she entered he crossed himself, exclaiming: "Thy ways, all divine Creator, are as inscrutable as they are merciful! Virtue is thy peculiar care! Oh, my dear madam," he continued, "what happiness to behold you again!"

"And I," said Louisa, "feel equal

pleasure at seeing you, for this satisfaction I so little expected"—

"Ah," answered the good man, "I know to what you allude," shaking his head; "that was a sad story, but we must speak gently of the dead. I lament the artifice that has been practised; the person who was made the instrument in the deception, lately confessed to me that Mr. Morrice had written to him, desiring him to write and announce my death. Mr. Morrice said, it was to accomplish some very important point, and that he should be turned out of his situation as steward, if he did not act as desired. This threat made the man write and assert a falsehood. But I am happy to find it was of little avail; you were destined to a better fate,—for other proofs of artifice of Mr. Morrice's have come within my knowledge: but peace to his ashes, he was

one of the Rossmore family, and I must not detest his memory, though I cannot respect it.

The good priest then changed the conversation: he told Louisa, that the daughter of the fisherman's widow promised to be every thing they could wish; that the money she had left in his hands, he had appropriated to the purpose of instructing her in all the useful branches of education, which he thought would fit her for the station of life she would fill.

Louisa thanked him for his attention, and trusted they should all live to see her grow up a worthy member of society.

“I,” said the good man, “can scarcely expect this gratification, for my glass is nearly run, and I feel tottering on the brink of that eternity which I do not dread. I look forward with hope, trusting, as far as my

abilities would admit, I have fulfilled my mission on earth, and I wait with patience and resignation for a summons from the divine Author of my being." All were much affected.

Louisa laid her white hand on the emaciated one of the priest's, whilst her beauteous eyes were fixed on his face.

George Tarleton threw his arm round his beloved wife; never but once before he thought had she looked so bewitching, and that was at the moment he received her loved hand at the altar. Indulging in this reflection, he silently listened to the benediction of the priest, who continued:

"Though I may be denied seeing the happy effects of your exertions to do good, yet long, very long may you both live! and may your children's children ever continue in

peaceable possession of this domain ! and when it is the will of him, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, to call me hence, I shall be certain that the indigent of my flock will be attended to by her, whose charitable mind will never be cramped by prejudices of her own religion !—The poor mendicant of the church of Rome will share your bounty equally with the protestant : and now suffer me to assure you both, that by a residence amongst your tenantry you will best secure their esteem ; your virtues, and example will tame their ferocious manners, and you will find the wild Irish, as they are denominated, can be most subservient to those they love. The kindness of their landlords is to them perfect emancipation, and they soon feel and acknowledge the delightful influence.”

George Tarleton accorded with this idea; the priest he knew must be well acquainted with the lower class of people: they were in the habit of delivering their untutored sentiments to him, and he thanked him for this advice and salutary opinion, which confirmed him in the wish he always had of making Ireland his home.

Much gratified by the reception and conversation they had with the good priest, they took their leave.

As they returned, they met Mr. and Mrs. Cust, who had been indulging in a ramble round the plantations, the beauty of which they much admired. The fine rich country that bounded them added to the perfection of the landscape, and they congratulated their valued friend on the advantages attending her situation.

Louisa in turn related her interview with the priest: Mrs Cust declared she must visit the charming man, which she did the next day.

Lord Rossmore's liberality led him to rejoice that father O'Gahaghan still existed, though he deeply felt the deception his brother had practised.

Mrs. Cust mentioned having seen the venerable man: Lord Rossmore had before heard of his being yet alive, but in the present state of his spirits, it was a subject he could not converse on, and no more was said.

All the neighbouring families called on the new married pair, but their stay was so short, it precluded any other kind of visiting, and indeed the recent death in the family would have prevented any festivity at that time. But the large donations to the poor, and entertainment of their tenants, was more gratifying to Louisa than

any other amusement: added to this, all that hospitality could dictate, or grandeur embellish, awaited them during their stay at the castle.

Lord Rossmore regretted it was to be so short; but Captain Courtney's time was limited, and his daughter was anxious he should be present at her first appearance in Dublin as a married woman.

Lord Rossmore saw the propriety of this wish, and consented to their going, on a promise of a speedy return.

Lady Almeria was not so easily appeased; she was more vehement in her expressions of regret; she owned it was her opinion that Louisa should sacrifice more to friendship! but Lady Almeria had never been married; she had never felt the reciprocal, the indissoluble tie of plighted

faith, and conjugal regard, which surpasses all others.

Captain Courtney alone divided the heart of his daughter. Affection to a parent, is established before that which a husband demands, and no woman can make a good wife who does not admit of this truth.

Louisa told her adoring husband very often, he must ever expect to find a rival in her father; this he readily admitted; indeed he would have loved her less could she have been indifferent to her parent. Yet friendship was not forgotten, and she parted from Lord Rossmore and Lady Almeria with true regret.

Mrs. Cust was perfectly charmed with Lady Almeria; her eccentricities, which had now gained ground, pleased the lively imagination of Mrs. Cust. She very much regretted leav-

ing Rossmore Castle, and she looked forward with pleasure to the time of visiting it again ; even should it lose the present amiable inmates, she should still find those she highly regarded, in the persons of Louisa and George Tarleton.

Soon after they arrived in Dublin, there was a ball at the Castle, which the whole party attended, the brides having been previously presented.

Louisa, in a blaze of jewels, which added brilliancy to her charms, accompanied by the rich heiress Mrs. Cust, excited general notice and admiration, much to the annoyance of the envious part of her acquaintance, who, notwithstanding their former malice, were happy to be recognised by the bride.

Lady Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Stafford declared, diamonds gave a finish to the appearance of Mrs. George Tarle-

ton, which she had always wanted, and that a little more ton would soon be acquired, when, as a married woman, she would throw off that shyness, which before, they imagined, she fancied was vastly pretty.

Captain Courtney met the Viceroy with all that respect, a truly loyal mind is ever inclined to pay to the representative of his King, and one whom that King thinks worthy to delegate with authority; and he received from the Lord Lieutenant every mark of attention; whilst his amiable consort, whose smile was sufficient to gratify, particularly noticed Mrs. Tarleton.

Lord Mountmorrice pestered Louisa with his attention and fulsome flattery; she was again in fashion, and consequently again excited his admiration. He said, all Dublin was enlivened by her return: he had feared they were

gone to rusticate in the country, but was delighted to find they had more taste, though many a fair belle had reason to regret her return, as this night she eclipsed them all.

Louisa had little patience to listen to his compliments; she recollected the last time she had met Lord Mountmorrice; his manner then, and the inuendos he had thrown out had much hurt her feelings, and his compliments now were disgusting.

Captain Courtney was highly gratified by the reception he met with at the Castle; and he felt less reluctance at parting from his daughter than he had ever done, now he had seen and mixed with those she was in future to associate with. On their separation, he promised that as soon as he could (with honour) retire from the service, he would, and he looked forward with delight to the time,

when, having fulfilled his duty to his king and country, he might enjoy the society of his daughter in sweet uninterrupted repose. In the mean time, he was happy to leave her surrounded by all who loved her.

The elder Mr. Tarleton was a second father to her; they resided with him the short time they were to remain in Dublin, not thinking it worth while to take a house, as Rossmore Castle and the Dargle Cottage were, in future, to be their principal places of residence.

Louisa determined on going to the Cottage, before her return to Rossmore Castle. She only waited in Dublin to see her friend, Miss Maude, united to Mr. Spenser, who had just arrived from England.

Miss Maude flew to her dear Mrs. Tarleton, to inform her of his arrival. "How delightful," she said

with her usual rattle, "the dear man should come before you left Dublin ! I really don't know how I should be able to support the approaching solemn ceremony, without your presence; — You behaved so prettily yourself ;—I have been practising to appear like you, but I fear it will not do.—Come, now, pray give me a few lessons; it will only be returning the obligation you are under to me, for initiating you into the manners and customs of the gay world. You have certainly been an apt scholar, I wish I may prove the same."

She then rattled through all the marriage ceremony.

"I think," said Mrs. Tarleton, laughing as she finished, "you have little to learn."—

"Ah, indeed I have a great deal," answered her gay friend; "I am not yet perfect; I have long, it is true,

known how to promise to love, but if you remark, I hesitated at obey—it is an alarming word:”—

“Not at all,” replied Louisa; “the heart in the cause connects them so closely, I do not see how they can well be separated.”

“Oh, delightful,” exclaimed Miss Maude, “you give me courage, and I will immediately fix the day.”

Lady Doneraile's carriage was waiting for her at the door; she skipped into it, and was off in a moment.

In the evening Louisa had a note from her, begging her attendance the next morning. She, delighted, obeyed the summons, and had the happiness of seeing her good tempered gay friend united to the man of her heart.

CHAP. XVI.

LOUISA had not now a wish ungratified;—united herself to the man of her fondest regard, with a fortune ample in the extreme, but not too much so, to fulfil all the wishes of her heart; her husband's generous nature according with all her schemes of doing good !

After Miss Maude's marriage, they set off immediately to the Cottage. Louisa was anxious to assure the surrounding poor, that they should receive the same fostering care and protection from her, as they had done in the lifetime of her aunt.

A good mind, experiencing felicity itself, wishes all nature to partake; this was the case with Louisa: she could not bear to think a creature within her reach was unhappy, whilst she was so supremely blessed, and all around her soon felt the influence of her charity and kindness. She truly enjoyed being once more at the Cottage; there was only one drawback on her happiness, and that was the loss of her aunt's society. But the wisdom of God had seen proper to deprive her of this, and it would have been impious to repine. It would have been ungrateful not to have enjoyed the blessings yet granted her.

She determined to stay long enough at the cottage to erect a temple to her beloved aunt; for, although her memory was consecrated in her own bosom, Louisa wished some public tribute, some lasting memorial of re-

gard should appear; and they often indulged in the pleasing idea, that their children hereafter would linger round this edifice, raised to gratitude and affection.

The building Mr. Tarleton hastened as much as possible, for the accounts they received of Lord Rossmore's health from lady Almeria were of a very alarming nature, and as soon as the soothing occupation was over that commemorated Mrs. Connolly, they set off for Rossmore Castle.

Louisa's father, when he first consented to her marrying Mr. George, wrote to his brother, Mr. Courtney, informing him, that he had allowed his daughter to admit his addresses, and that if his family proved on investigation to be such as they could not object to, he had promised his consent, and trusted in that case her uncle would not withhold the legacy left by her grandfather.

Mr. Courtney's answer was very violent; he declared if she so far demeaned herself, as to marry that young man, she never should have a sixpence of the Courtney property.

Captain Courtney felt so indignant at this conduct of his brother's, that when Louisa married, he did not inform him of it, and the first intelligence Mr. Courtney had of the event was from the papers.

The paragraph that announced it was most gratifying to the pride of Mr. Courtney, he having no idea that it was the same Mr. George he had so much disapproved: he read it over repeatedly, and with much satisfaction exclaimed: "That will do. 'George Tarleton, Esq. presumptive heir to the Earl of Rossmore, to Miss Courtney.' That is well, the names assimilate; she shall now have her grandfather's legacy."

He immediately wrote a letter of congratulations to Louisa, saying, that he had now pleasure in giving up her fortune, as she had not disgraced herself by marrying Mr. George, who he never had a good opinion of.

Louisa had much gratification in explaining to her uncle that the unknown Mr. George was now her esteemed husband, in the character of George Tarleton.

Mr. Courtney felt truly mortified on the receipt of her letter; he did not know how to do away his former opinions, and the only plan he could think of now to regain the good opinion of them all, was to put Captain Courtney into possession of part of his property. For this purpose, he had a deed of gift drawn up and sent to him.

Captain Courtney's first impulse

was to return it, but he reflected it had been the property of his ancestors; nature had given him a strong claim on it, and he rejoiced his brother had learnt to do justice.

Louisa was informed of all this by letters she received on her arrival at Rossmore castle.

Lady Almeria was delighted to see them again, and the good Earl was revived by their society; he lingered on for some months, when he peaceably resigned his breath, happy in the reflection, that the next possessors knew how to enjoy and adorn his titles and estates: nor were his expectations disappointed, for in the practice of every virtue, in the dispensing of every good, the young Lord and Lady Rossmore were unequalled.

The good Father O'Gahagan, though far advanced in years, lived to see their children educating in those

principles which made their parents so estimable.

Lady Almeria always resided with them; the death of her two brothers had made her very desponding: she thought there was not a creature on earth so much to be pitied as herself: the only consolation she would receive, was that she derived from Louisa's children. The daughter of the fisherman's widow was their attendant; indeed the excellent education Father O'Gahagan had taken care she should receive, had fitted her for a governess. She remained under the good priest's care till Lady Rossmore's first child could lisp out its letters, and then she was taken into the house to assist in instructing the children in the rudiments of education; but their religious ideas and principles they imbibed wholly from their mother.

Brought up under her own immediate eye, they learnt and inherited all those virtues which had so conspicuously adorned the character of Louisa Courtney, who first, as the "Officer's Daughter," and afterwards as the happy wife of the Earl of Rossmore, enjoyed all the felicity her virtues merited, and which the mercy of Providence bestowed.

Louisa, now Lady Rossmore, never forgot for a moment the gratitude she owed the Almighty Being who presided over her fate. From that great source she was sensible all she now enjoyed was derived: she was never dazzled by the splendour or fading pleasures of this world. Prosperity is often more trying than adversity. Louisa had in some degree experienced both: for a short time, all the advantages she had been born to, and from her infancy enjoyed,

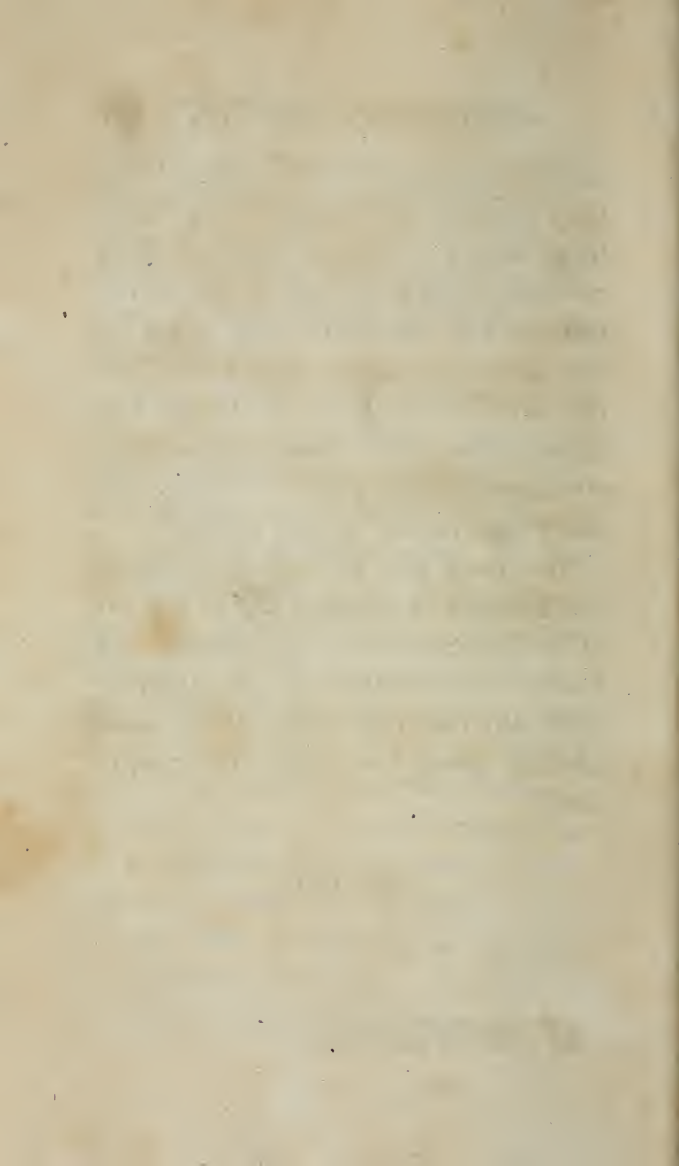
seemed to forsake her; they almost disappeared; yet she remained mistress of herself; strongly proving the good effects of a virtuous education, well-regulated passions, and proper example.

Let the fashionable mother of the day, pause, when she is night after night attending the midnight revel, and leaving her helpless children to the care of servants only. If she wants resolution to fly from the attractive lure midnight dissipation holds out, let her go to her nursery, and behold there the infant resemblance of herself! Though decked with all the embellishments of fashion, her epitome is more lovely from being as yet uncontaminated! Let her endeavour to keep her offspring so; let her consider it can only be effected by matronly attention, and that, if not fostered by maternal care, all the

shoots of virtue will be blighted ere they come to perfection. Can hirelings supply a mother's place? Shall servants rival a mother in the affection of her children? This must be the case when left to them alone, for the mind of youth is open to the first impressions, and those are always strongest, which please "When memory first dawns on our senses."

This fond and endearing principle had assisted in forming the character of Louisa, who only recollected her Father and Mother in the instructions she had received:—these alone having given her mind its proper bias!

THE END.





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